A KINGDOM OF PRIESTS:

FORMING AN ORDAINED PRIESTHOOD FOR THE ROYAL PRIESTHOOD

A THESIS-PROJECT

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To my wife, Christine, who has taught me the most about making oblation of others, especially by the exquisite presence she offers me. By mediating the love of God to me and holding my life before him in prayer, you have been a priest to me. Thank you.

God has *Gardens* to give away! He has cities to spare! He has history he hasn't even used! The last of all the mercies is that God is *lighter* than we are, that in the heart of the Passion lies the divine Mirth, and that even in the cities of our exile he still calls to Adam only to catch the glory, to offer the world, and to return the service that shapes the City of God.

—Robert Farrar Capon, *An Offering of Uncles*

Now therefore, if you will indeed obey my voice and keep my covenant, you shall be my treasured possession among all peoples, for all the earth is mine; and you shall be to me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation. These are the words that you shall speak to the people of Israel.

—Exodus 19:5-6

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PREFACE

I grew up in a Baptist church that emphasized the priesthood of all believers, then cut my teeth in ministry during early adulthood in a charismatic nondenominational context heavily influenced by the cell church movement, which called lay leaders "pastors" if they had any responsibilities of spiritual oversight. Both of these environments rightly emphasized the ministry of the whole people of God, laying a wonderful foundation for my understanding of church, mission, and leadership. These church traditions placed high value on ministry as shared among the whole people of God. They did not consistently, however, value the whole of life, every arena of our earthly life, as the common place where we "work out our salvation." In short, this ecclesial context rightly placed emphasis on the whole people of God in the ministry of the church, but with too little attention to knowing God in the whole of life.

Through the influence of several pastors, mentors, professors, and authors I later gained a sacramental vision of the world. I learned to see all creation as the scope of God's redemptive activity, and the opportunity for worship that every place, person, thing, and moment presents. The common stuff of our life, much like wheat and grapes turned into bread and wine, can be offered up and mystically hold the real presence of Christ. This sacramental spirituality found in the Great Tradition, in my case Anglicanism, has a pastoral history that sometimes creates a gap between the clergy and the laity. Whereas the ecclesial contexts of the first half of my life emphasized the ministry of the whole people of God but not necessarily the sacredness of the whole of life, the Anglican ecclesial context often emphasized knowing God in the whole of life, with less attention to the ministry of the whole people of God.

Throughout my life as a priest in the Anglican Communion I have sought to merge these emphases, to teach and equip the whole people of God in a sacramental view of their own work, life, and ministry.

The more I read scripture and understand its theology of creation, temple, the presence of God, and the priesthood, the more I see the richness of priestly imagery for our understanding of what it means to be human, and therefore what it means for ordained priests who lead the royal priesthood into their true humanity. Professors Eugene Peterson, Loren Wilkinson, Paul Stevens and others helped me to integrate these threads into a tapestry of sacramental spirituality and ministry at Regent College. Authors like Robert Farrar Capon, Alexander Schmemann, John Stott, and Chris Wright helped me to see creation and the *missio Dei* in holistic and sacramental perspective.

In the course of my Doctor of Ministry studies at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, I was introduced to Old Testament scholar Tim Laniak's excellent work opening up the riches of the biblical imagery of shepherding and the real-world lessons of shepherds. This imagery gave rise, of course, to our most common English word for clergy, "pastor." I realized that while my own tradition calls clergy "priests," nothing like Laniak's work exists for the rich biblical imagery of priesthood, from Adam and Eve in the garden temple, to the royal priesthood in the world.

To be *royal priests* in the world is a profound statement of what it means to be human. To be *ordained priests* leading the royal priesthood is an equally profound statement of what it means to be clergy. Priesthood is an overlooked, but compelling and near-comprehensive, biblical image for the calling. It brings together what it means to be human (theological anthropology), clergy (pastoral theology), and the church (ecclesiology).

A biblical theology of priesthood, and its concomitant sacramental spirituality, merges the best of all the ecclesial traditions that had shaped me. This personal part of my story was the primary impetus for my research and writing on the topic, but there's another layer. Soon after the formation of the Anglican Church of North America, aspiring and experienced ministers alike came from other denominational and nondenominational backgrounds seeking to serve as priests in the ACNA. I saw that many of them were both theologically educated and gifted for ordained ministry, but did not necessarily have a priestly and sacramental imagination for life and ministry. This observation provided the final rationale for developing PriestCraft as a cohort-based formational experience for aspiring clergy at the threshold of ordination.

While I began with the primary goal of formation for ordained priests, and found this to be an effective process to that end, I found myself as much or even more excited by the implications of biblical priesthood for the whole people of God, the royal priesthood. I was reminded of the centrality of making oblation to our humanity in Christ, and was freshly inspired to live the priestly charge Paul gives in Romans 12, " . . . by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship." The process of study, curriculum development, mentoring, and writing—these things in themselves—were for me a priestly act of making oblation, of offering this very labor up to God and to his church as a living sacrifice. I pray that it may be holy and acceptable for the praise of God's glory, and for the sake of others.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The church I serve has been shaped for the past fifteen years by the tagline, “No one stands alone,” a theological axiom for all of life, this project included. Each follower of Jesus stands in the company of Christ and his people. I’ve been accompanied by many people who have modeled, in quotidian ways, the priestly life of making oblation, of prayer and engaging God’s Word, of holiness, and of bearing witness. I’ve also been loved and served by institutions, congregations, and pastors.

I would like to thank, first of all, the six PriestCraft cohort participants, whom I also consider colleagues and friends: Matt Dampier (now a wonderful partner in the work of the gospel in my own parish), Bryan Biba, Ronnie McGowin, Nobie Hendricks, Austin Becton, and Garrett Flatt. They were not only insightful conversation partners, but also a joy-filled group of people who gave their all to each other and to the process. I am grateful to the pastors (Dan Davis and Ron Parrish) priests (Bob Wismer+) and bishops (+Terence Kelshaw, +Philip Jones, and +Todd Hunter) of my adult life, who have been priests to me and shaped me vocationally.

I am a firm believer in the importance and redemptive potential of institutions. Regent College had an enormous impact on me in ways that directly led to this project, and in a way that is hard to describe simply in terms of coursework. There was (and perhaps still is) a cultural ethos, a vibrant community, and an emphasis on the particular and the personal that accompanied the formal curriculum during my studies there. From its inception, Regent College (and its founder, Jim Houston) gave attention to Spiritual Theology, Marketplace Theology, the arts, and the spirituality of everyday life—arenas of theological reflection that were uncommon, even unprecedented, in evangelical seminaries at the time of Regent’s founding. As pertaining to the

themes of this project, I am especially grateful for the teaching and friendship of Eugene Peterson, Paul Stevens, Loren Wilkinson, Gordon Fee, Charles Ringma, and Bob Ekblad.

Christ Church Anglican, the parish I serve as Rector in Austin, Texas, was generous in its support of me and this project, allowing time for both the coursework and some weeks for writing, not to mention the love and support so consistently offered. Toward the end of my research for this project my wife was in a near-fatal accident that hospitalized her for 5 weeks, requiring many months of intensive rehabilitation and years of chronic symptoms. The community of Christ Church became, or rather revealed, a beautiful expression of *koinonia*, as members were priests to each other, to Christine and me, and to my family. This personal crisis disrupted this project (the least of my worries at the time, of course), but now at its completion I cannot look back over the years without remembrance and deep gratitude for the sustaining grace of God's people. I thank God for the staff, Vestry, and people of Christ Church; and when it comes to the "priesthood of all believers," few are as passionate and consistent about living this out as Eric Stumberg.

I would also like to thank Meghan Scully. She has worn many hats, from parishioner to Vestry member to co-worker and back to parishioner, but through it all, friend. Though there was no official title, she was the *de facto* Project Coordinator for PriestCraft, and provided support and encouragement far beyond any requirement or expectation.

I am thankful to Vera Bowen who provided a place to retreat and write. I fell in love with the land and the vision of Shield Ranch, which seeks to steward the land like a priest, making oblation of the particular places on earth entrusted to them. Likewise, Laity Lodge provided a beautiful place to write, with the generous hospitality of Steven Purcell, Tim Blanks, and Ryan Hernandez.

David Currie, my professor and thesis supervisor at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, has been patient through the setbacks and crises of the protracted process of completion. I am not only grateful for his teaching, but also his editorial guidance, practical support, friendship, and hospitality together with his wife Sue. I am also grateful for Brent Neely's editorial comments, and Meredith Conrow's editing skills that have helped me across the finish line.

The last and greatest word of appreciation is for my family: the Warners in Fort Worth and the Taylors in Austin, and especially those under my own roof (Christine, Brendan, Cormac, Skye, and Bronwyn). Christine has walked through this process more closely than anyone, been a sounding board for ideas, a practical help throughout the project, prayed for me, and "held down the fort" during my writing retreats. She is a priest to me, mediating the love of God, while also living a priestly life for the sake of others, especially "the least of these."

ABBREVIATIONS

ACNA	Anglican Church of North America
C4SO	The Diocese of Churches for the Sake of Others
TEC	The Episcopal Church (USA)

ABSTRACT

The Anglican Church of North America has attracted aspiring or experienced clergy from backgrounds that have not traditionally formed in their ministers a sacramental and priestly vision, both hallmarks of Anglican spirituality. To address this need, this pilot project gathered a cohort of Anglican priests-in-formation to develop in them a priestly and sacramental imagination for life and ministry. The formation process is accomplished through reflection on the priestly imagery in Scripture, summarized as the "priestly quadrilateral." The project's goal was to prepare ordained clergy as priests to the church, the royal priesthood, who in turn are priests to the world.

CHAPTER ONE

THE PROBLEM AND ITS SETTING

The biblical imagery of "priest" is ubiquitous and profound in the scriptures, describing in turn the ministry of a chosen few, a whole nation, Jesus the Great High Priest, and, finally, the church. In the Anglican tradition, clergy are called "priests." Other biblical images have informed the church's understanding of the work of ordained ministry, such as *herald* (emphasizing the role of preaching), or *servant* (emphasizing the manner in which we do our work), or, more commonly and richly, *shepherd* (emphasizing the call to nourish, guard, and care for the flock, and providing the most common title for ordained ministers: "Pastor"). There is not one single master image that encompasses the calling of ordained ministry; we need them all.

There are also some contemporary cultural images that have shaped recent views of pastoral ministry, such as counselor/therapist, coach, leader, entrepreneur, and CEO. The rich imagery of priestly service has been lost, within Protestantism, in the conversation of both biblical and cultural images of the vocation of clergy. While ordained ministers of the Anglican Church in North America (ACNA) are called "priests," many of them have not been formed by theological reflection on the scope and depth of the biblical imagery of priesthood and its implications for their ministry.

This deficiency is due to several trends and causes. First, in the early 21st Century many of the individuals being ordained in the ACNA are trained in non-Anglican seminaries where they do not necessarily receive a theological vision of priesthood.[1] Second, many ordained

1. See Timothy Keller for his explanation and defense of the phrase "theological vision." Timothy Keller, *Center Church: Doing Balanced, Gospel-centered Ministry in Your City* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2012), 16-21.

ministers from other denominational or non-denominational backgrounds have transferred into Anglicanism and are received based on their prior denominational or independent church credentialing, but with little to no supplemental Anglican formation. Third, even in cases where those ordained or received into Anglican priesthood received instruction and formation on what it means to be a "priest," not enough attention has been paid to the robust scope of the biblical term.

This trend has not been researched and documented but is widely attested to by denominational leaders. In an email to the author dated April 11, 2017, The Rev. Dr. Andrew Grosso of Nashotah House comments on this dynamic from the perspective of his service in a theological institution devoted to the formation of Anglican priests: "I have a mountain of anecdotal evidence of the trend you're exploring."[2] The Rt. Rev. Todd Hunter, Bishop of the Diocese of Churches for the Sake of Others, serves one of the largest dioceses in the ACNA. With a constant flow of clergy being developed within the diocese and/or coming from non-Anglican backgrounds, Bishop Hunter also affirms, "I certainly have seen this issue," in an email to the author on April 11, 2017. Finally, David Roseberry, the ACNA's Canon for Mission, notes in personal correspondence from April 11, 2017 that "we are disjointed in our formation." It is evident at every level—from the provincial office to a leading seminary to the bishop of one of the largest dioceses, and from the author's fifteen years' experience in parish and diocesan leadership—that the formation of a priestly and sacramental imagination for the calling is uneven among clergy seeking ACNA ordination from other church backgrounds.

When ACNA priests do not have a clear sense of the scope and breadth of biblical priesthood, it can cause problems not only for their own vocational faithfulness, but also for their

2. Rev. Dr. Andrew Grosso, Personal Correspondence, April 11, 2017. Dr. Grosso is the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs at Nashotah House.

congregation, diocese, and denomination. The people of God are called to be a royal priesthood, but if ACNA priests themselves cannot serve as exemplars of this biblical priesthood or instruct and form the congregation in its priestly callings, both will become a diminished version of God's desire for his church to be a kingdom of priests.[3] Also, because biblical priesthood involves a sacramental worldview, ACNA priests who lead with a defective or under-developed understanding of priesthood could contribute to a North American Anglican denominational culture that loses some of its sacramental and holistic historical distinctives within Protestantism. Finally, the missional context of the church in 21st-century North America calls for a recovery of *all* vocations as priestly service.[4] The less the church is led into her royal priesthood by the ordained priesthood, the less she serves as salt and light in the darkness of the world.

The project develops, implements, and assesses a formational process called PriestCraft to prepare ordained gospel ministers with a priestly formation rooted in the biblical imagery of "priesthood." Though several communions have developed, through theological reflection on the tradition and practices of the church through centuries, a well-developed sacerdotal understanding of the priestly vocation, PriestCraft focuses almost exclusively on the biblical material that informs priesthood.[5] PriestCraft is a cohort-based program for Anglican ordinands and recently ordained priests, with a special focus on forming a priestly imagination for the work of ministry.

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3. Exodus 19:6; Deuteronomy 7:6; 1 Peter 2:5-9; Revelation 1:6; 5:10.

4. John R. W. Stott, *Mission: Rethinking Vocation* (Vancouver, BC: Regent College Publishing, 2019).

5. This would certainly include the Roman Catholic Church and the Orthodox churches. To a lesser degree it might include the Anglican Communion, which has an Anglo-Catholic contingent within its diverse Protestant spectrum. To be clear, PriestCraft's limitation to the biblical material on priesthood does not reflect a personal rejection of all the ways priesthood has been developed throughout the non-Protestant Communions. It is, rather, an attempt to reclaim and apply the depths of biblical revelation for the priestly vocation.

The Denominational Setting

The context of this study is the Anglican Church of North America in general, and the Diocese of Churches for the Sake of Others (C4SO) in particular.[6] The ACNA "unites 134,000 Anglicans in 1,062 congregations across the United States, Canada, and Mexico into a single Church. On April 16, 2009 it was recognized as a province of the global Anglican Communion, by the Primates of the Global Fellowship of Confessing Anglicans."[7] Though formal recognition of this provincial structure is recent, in church historical terms, the ACNA emerged from The Episcopal Church of the United States with both historical continuity and global fellowship within the Anglican Communion, dating back to its Reformation origins (and beyond, by virtue of apostolic succession and participation in the Great Tradition).

The mid-2000's saw a realignment of North American Anglicanism as many parishes, clergy, and several entire dioceses left The Episcopal Church (USA) for theological reasons, such as formal departure from the received teachings of the church and scripture on Holy Matrimony, as well a lack of discipline and accountability concerning fundamental credal matters in some parts of the denomination. Because Anglicans worldwide value catholicity, many of those who felt compelled to leave The Episcopal Church were deeply grieved to participate in disunity. Each week, after all, we confess the Nicene Creed, which affirms our belief in "one holy catholic and apostolic Church."

The drift of The Episcopal Church produced a tension between remaining "holy and apostolic" on the one hand and, on the other, the call to be "one and catholic." Those who left The Episcopal Church privileged the former over the latter, inasmuch as the Provincial structures

6. The Diocese of Churches for the Sake of Others, accessed June 15, 2020, www.c4so.org.

7. Anglican Church in North America, "About," ACNA, accessed June 15, 2020, http://www.anglicanchurch.net/index.php/main/About/

represent the latter. In other words, you might say that the ACNA privileged the pursuit of holiness and apostolicity over *structural* unity and catholicity.

The call to be a *holy* church is, at least in part, an invitation by God to flourish as we embrace the ethics communicated in Scripture, which are likewise interpreted and commended by the communion of saints. While there is longstanding ethical ambiguity in church history around some issues (the definition of just war, for example), other teachings of the church have remained unambiguous for two millennia. All Christians, everywhere and throughout all history, for example, have read Scripture as affirming gendered identity, and marriage as a covenant between man and woman. [8]

The call to be an *apostolic* church speaks to the missional constitution of the church, a call to be sent ones obeying Jesus' Commission to baptize and make disciples and join him in the restoration of all things. The call to be apostolic also involves faithfulness to the apostolic teaching. The call to be *holy* and *apostolic* are just as much at the heart of the church's identity as the call to be *one* and *catholic*. As The Episcopal Church drifted from theological orthodoxy and orthopraxy, it predictably lost its evangelistic zeal and apostolic urgency, resulting in a long, slow decline.

Is the call to be *one* and *catholic* less important to the identity of the church? As grievous as it was to step away from the Episcopal Church, the loss of structural unity was deemed necessary in order to preserve ecclesial apostolicity and holiness within the church. This grief is mitigated, however, by the argument that the departure from The Episcopal Church (USA) maintained greater oneness and catholicity with the church historic, as well as with contemporary

8. "So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them" (Genesis 1:27); "Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh" (Genesis 2:24).

ecumenical partners such as the Roman Catholic Church and the Eastern Orthodox Church, not to mention greater alignment with the majority of the world's Anglicans in the Provinces of the Global South.[9] Thus, for many theologically orthodox Episcopalians in early 21st-century North America, the formation of a new province, in communion with the provinces of the Global South, was the wisest way for the church to remain faithful, both *one* and *catholic*, on the one hand, and *holy* and *apostolic* on the other, during this fractious and unprecedented era in the five hundred year history of the Anglican Communion. The ACNA is now joined to the worldwide Anglican Communion through its membership in GAFCON.[10]

The Formation of Dioceses within ACNA

Those who departed the Episcopal Church but wished to remain within the Anglican Communion found temporary provincial homes through episcopal oversight from various Provinces of the Global South, while awaiting the formation of a new Anglican Province in North America. It wasn't long before this came to pass. Clergy, parishes, and dioceses began a gradual process of movement from international oversight into this new provincial Anglican structure, in the months and years following ACNA's official formation in 2009. At that time dioceses either transferred into the ACNA or were newly formed within the ACNA. When a minimum of twelve parishes averaging at least 50 people in weekly worship attendance organize

9. The phrase "Global South" refers to the more theologically orthodox non-Western Provinces of the Anglican Communion, such as Uganda, Nigeria, Rwanda, the Southern Cone, and others.

10. GAFCON stands for the Global Anglican Future Conference and is comprised of ACNA and eight "Global South" Provinces (as well as "branches" within some western Provinces). See https://www.gafcon.org/about/global-movement for details. The relationship of the ACNA to the Anglican Communion remains contested, with the "Global South" affirming full membership, and the "Global West" not affirming full membership.

themselves, whether by affinity or geographic proximity, they may apply to become a diocese.[11] There are now 28 dioceses.[12] Because, speaking comparatively in denominational terms, there are not many ACNA churches across the country, and rarely enough in one city or region to form a geographic diocese, some dioceses are organized by affinity and/or a relational network, and thus spread across great distances. Such is the case with the Diocese of Churches for the Sake of Others.

The Formation of the Diocese of Churches for the Sake of Others

The Diocese of Churches for the Sake of Others was formed in 2013 by Bishop Todd Hunter, in cooperation with several priests and parishes that had formerly been part of the provincial oversight of Rwanda, and were temporarily resident in the Diocese of Pittsburgh.[13] On February 25, 2013 Bishop Todd Hunter, Archbishop Robert Duncan, and several representatives of the Dioceses of Pittsburgh and the proposed new diocese met at Restoration Anglican Church north of Dallas, Texas for formal discussions about the formation of a new

11. This is according to the Canons and Constitution of the ACNA. A Diocese is the basic ecclesial unit of which a Province is composed and is defined by the presence of a bishop with clergy and parishes under his care. The ACNA Canons and Constitution regarding the formation of a diocese can be found in Title 1, Canon 5, Section 1 at http://www.anglicanchurch.net/index.php/main/governance.

12. "Dioceses and Congregations," ACNA, accessed June 15, 2020, http://www.acna.org/admin_units?q%5Bkind_eq%5D=Diocese.

13. Initially, the North American churches (called the Anglican Mission in the Americas, AMiA) under the Province of Rwanda chose not to become part of ACNA, instead giving consideration to remain a sodality as a Missionary Society. As a result of deteriorating relations between AMiA and Rwandan leaders, however, the vast majority of AMiA's parishes and clergy eventually left the AMiA to affiliate with the ACNA. Some parishes and clergy moved temporarily into the ACNA's Diocese of Pittsburgh, as they awaited the formation of viable and/or local diocesan options within ACNA.

diocese.[14] This fruitful meeting laid the groundwork needed for the procedural steps that would follow.

A total of twenty-five congregations clustered in California, Kansas, and Texas ratified the Constitution and Canons of the proposed diocese on May 11, 2013. The approval of the formation of this new diocesan was then granted by the ACNA College of Bishops during their next regularly scheduled meetings at Nashotah House Theological Seminary in Nashotah, Wisconsin on June 20-21, 2013.[15]

What's in a Name? – Diocese of Churches for the Sake of Others

Traditional Anglican parish and diocesan names reflect either geography, saints, seasons of the church, or theological emphasis (Trinity, Cross, St. John's, Epiphany, Incarnation, etc.). The name "Diocese of Churches for the Sake of Others" is intended to capture a theological category not often highlighted in traditional church names: missiology. It reflects a vision to see the church "announce, embody, and demonstrate the kingdom of God" as salt and light in the world.[16] The natural drift of churches, and every organization, is toward maintenance and self-preservation. Upon the formation of the diocese, Bishop Hunter wrote the following to his clergy:

> As an Anglican Ordinary I am now charged by the Archbishop and the Canons of ACNA to oversee the worship in our various churches. Most of you know what I've said in C4SO since its inception: we engineer church from the mission field backward. Thus C4SO

14. Participants from the Diocese of Pittsburgh included Robert Duncan (Archbishop of ACNA and Bishop of Pittsburgh), Mary Maggard Hays (Canon to the Ordinary), Alan Hawkins (Director of Anglican 1000), and Frank Lyons (Assisting Bishop). Participants from the proposed new diocese included Todd Hunter (Bishop), and the following priests and Rectors: Porter Taylor, Tony Baron, Cliff Warner, Daniel Adkinson, David Roseberry, Michael Swanson, Jed Roseberry, and Ger Jones.

15. "A Communique from the College of Bishops of the Anglican Church in North America," ACNA, June 21, 2013, accessed June 15, 2020, http://www.anglicanchurch.net/?/main/page/627.

16. "Our Mission and Story," C4SO, accessed June 15, 2020, http://www.c4so.org/our-mission-story/.

> happily has churches that are very evangelical low-church all the way to high-church Anglo-catholics. I am comfortable with that and I respect the missional decisions local churches make.[17]

The Researcher's Observational Location

My vocational background and experience place me in a position to observe the historic context, the contemporary setting, and formational traits of new clergy, as well as to address the problem. Let me reiterate the problem: it is not so much that new priests aren't "Anglican" enough, as if "Anglican" is the *telos* of pastoral formation. However, in a tradition that is characterized by a sacramental spirituality, and with tremendous missional potential, and in which its ordained ministers are called "priests," there is far more that new Anglican clergy can apprehend and appropriate in the biblical call to live creative lives of priestly service. This is a call to serve as priests of creation and the church, facing God on behalf of His creation and people, facing the world on behalf of God, and leading the whole people of God to live their everyday lives as priests in the world. The entire church is a kingdom of priests to the nations. Do Anglican clergy in ACNA, who go by the name "priest," understand and live out a theological vision of what it means to be a priest serving and equipping a kingdom of priests? Not well enough; this is the problem PriestCraft hopes to address.[18]

I am well situated to observe and address this problem because of my own theological formation, ecclesial history within Anglicanism, and current roles and responsibilities. I owe a profound debt to the theological formation I received at Regent College, founded by Dr. James

17. Bishop Todd Hunter, email correspondence to his clergy, July 11, 2013.

18. The name PriestCraft was chosen to connote the learning of a trade, one that takes time and patience, as part of a guild or community of peers. The term refers to the formational process by which the priest himself or herself is crafted, on the one hand, and the art and craft of priestly work on the other.

Houston not to train clergy, but explicitly to train the whole people of God as a kingdom of priests who think about and approach their own vocations Christianly.[19] The foundation of Regent College occurred well before the late 20th and early 21st-century interest in marketplace theology, or "faith and work" initiatives. Dr. Houston, and by extension Regent College, was also an evangelical forerunner of "spiritual theology," which is characterized by attentiveness to the *lived* life in Christ, to the sacrament of every person, place, moment, and thing; all of life is holy, in other words. This bias toward the whole people of God and emphasis on our everyday lived life in Christ are two ways Regent College has influenced evangelicalism and, for that matter, my own theological formation. Every calling is a high calling; we are all priestly ambassadors of the kingdom of God, performing our everyday priestly service of offering up the world to God in oblation, and bearing witness of the Triune God to all creation.

I am also well placed to observe and address this problem because of my ecclesiastical history of service within Anglicanism. I was confirmed in the Diocese of New Westminster (Anglican Church of Canada) at Christ Church Cathedral in Vancouver, Canada while attending St. Helen's parish in Vancouver in the late 1990s. From the Anglican Church of Canada I moved to The Episcopal Church (TEC), accepting a call to serve in the Diocese of the Rio Grande under Bishop Terence Kelshaw, at the Pro Cathedral Church of St. Clement in El Paso, Texas from 2001 to 2006.[20] Up until, and including this point in life, my wife and I were certain of a call to cross-cultural mission and had spent the previous decade of our lives making every decision in light of this missionary call. In El Paso, a large part of my job was to develop an urban mission

19. Regent College has always referred to itself as "a graduate school of theological studies," not a "seminary."

20. A Pro Cathedral is a parish church that serves either as a co-cathedral when dioceses are geographically far flung, which was the case here, or as a temporary cathedral when the primary cathedral is unavailable.

that would connect the downtown mostly affluent and white congregation, located blocks away from the Mexican border, to its neighborhood, which was a vulnerable under-resourced community of mostly first-generation Spanish-speaking immigrants. To accomplish this, I founded Ciudad Nueva Community Outreach as church-based non-profit doing community development.[21] This essential call to mission, combined with God placing me in pastoral service within a congregation, provides the creative tension of my vocational identity.

From the U.S.-Mexican border, I answered the call in 2006 to serve a parish (Church of the Holy Trinity, Austin, Texas) within the Diocese of Texas (TEC). Two years later this parish departed from TEC to affiliate with the emerging, young Anglican movement in North America (ACNA). Renamed as Christ Church Austin, my parish first came under the provincial oversight of the Anglican Province of Rwanda, whose missionary arm in the United States was called the Anglican Mission in the Americas, or the AMiA.[22] Once the ACNA was formed, Christ Church Austin became temporarily resident in the Diocese of Pittsburgh as a way to enter the ACNA, until the Diocese of Churches for the Sake of Others was formed, which created a community of sister parishes in Texas with whom to join in fellowship and mission.

While serving in two different parishes since 2001, I have had ecclesial residence in three provinces and six dioceses. I have participated, both within the Episcopal and Anglican diocesan contexts, in numerous denominational boards, gatherings, committees, and task forces. I have served as Dean for C4SO's ministry in the state of Texas, with delegated oversight and responsibilities, on behalf of our Bishop Todd Hunter, for twenty-five clergy and ten parishes. A

21. For more information see www.ciudadnueva.org.

22. The Anglican Mission in the Americas (AMiA) was the North American missionary jurisdiction of the Province of Rwanda.

substantial part of my role as Dean of the Texas Deanery and Rector of Christ Church has been to discern with potential clergy a possible call to priestly ordination and assist them in the process of preparation. Additionally, as Rector I have conducted multiple nationwide hiring searches for young associate clergy, affording me a deep probe into the pool of emerging Anglican clergy in the United States. Serving as an Associate Rector, non-profit founder/director, and Rector has likewise provided multiple vantage points. These varied roles, responsibilities, and contexts of service have given me valuable insight into the formational strengths and weaknesses of the incoming and recently ordained priests of the ACNA.

Overview of the Research Design

This project involves three elements of implementation and inquiry, utilizing primarily participant observation and evaluative research methods. First, the PriestCraft formation process is designed with the purpose of shaping aspiring and new Anglican presbyters with a theological vision of their vocation as priests among a kingdom of priests.[23] The pedagogical and formational approach combines three live gatherings of six participants, with a combination of individual exercises and both synchronous and asynchronous digital interaction with each other.

The second element of implementation and inquiry is to engage the cohort with the curriculum, its practices, and each other. This is the heart of the project. As the cohort learns and grows together, I will observe the participants and the dynamics of change and development.

The final element of the research process will be the evaluation of the formational influence this learning experience had upon participants. Though I will have been observing and

23. I will use the terms *presbyters* and *ordained priests* and *priests among a kingdom of priests* and *clergy* interchangeably throughout this work, in order to disambiguate these ordained Anglican clergy from the whole people of God, who are also priests.

evaluating throughout the process, a retrospective view will afford greater clarity and the "big picture." Participants will also be asked to provide feedback, which will complement my observations. I expect that the result will be a re-imagination of our priestly identity, both as disciples and ordained ministers, with a broader scope of understanding and articulation of our call as bearers of God's image, an increased sense of awe and humility at the call to be priestly servants within a kingdom of priests, a new resonance in our reading of the biblical story, a priestly life and ministry that is more consonant with the theological depth of priestly imagery in the Bible, and vocational clarity as ones who make vows and enter holy orders within the ACNA.

Participants will be invited from within the Diocese of Churches for the Sake of Others and engaged in two retreats and a final gathering with interactive reading, reflections, activities, and conversations in between. These research questions will be explored with evaluative research methods, conducting both summative evaluation, to see if the process yields the desired results, and formative evaluation to learn how to improve the effectiveness of the curriculum and cohort design for future participants.

As ordained clergy consider the different dimensions of the self in which we hope to be formed and transformed, it's hard to improve upon the familiar symbols of head, heart, and hands. The head represents an emphasis on intellectual formation, the heart on spiritual formation, and the hands on habitual/practical formation.[24] The formational design of this cohort

24. I use the phrase "spiritual formation" here as a technical term that has found currency in the late twentieth and early twenty-first century to refer to the Spirit-empowered transformation of Christians to more fully reflect the image of God, for the sake of others. To be sure, these categories are overlapping and somewhat artificial in a holistic view of the self. Spiritual formation indeed involves our thoughts, affections, and actions, but even imperfect categories are necessary for clear communication and apprehension.

attempts to blend all three, with somewhat more emphasis on the head and heart than on the hands (though every major theme covered will include an exercise/practice to be completed).

The biblical-theological foundations at the beginning of the curriculum supply the authoritative source of all that follows, so that the "head" comprehends and integrates the categories of the priestly call. These foundations provide the lifelong conviction, as a people standing under Holy Scripture, that inform the heart and hands to repent and re-orient ourselves around God's definition and call to royal priesthood. The heart is the motor that drives the self. God-shaped desire or, in Augustinian terms, rightly ordered loves, sustain our practices. Final integration occurs through our embodied practices. In this formational process, I place more emphasis on the head and heart for two reasons: first, though the best way to train others in their vocational practices is on-the-job, or at least in close periodic contact with the trainee and their context, this kind of supervised field observation is not possible with participants coming from multiple different cities. Secondly, the participants themselves will know best how to apply locally and contextually what their head and heart has learned in the cohort. Even so, participants will still engage in exercises that conclude each formational theme with practical application.

Theological and Sociological Context for the Research Questions

The research questions of this project, discussed below, specifically investigate the formational benefit of the PriestCraft curriculum and cohort. While the investigation will empirically evaluate this formational experience, the development of the curriculum itself involves some theoretical research and writing on topics that will be presented in the learning community. In order to make sense of the empirical questions, we must first understand some of

the curriculum's theological and sociological context. These will be covered extensively in Chapters Two and Three.

The curriculum presents a biblical sketch of priesthood from Adam, the first priest in the garden temple, to the church, the royal priesthood who participates in the high priesthood of Christ, with a final emphasis on the participants' call to serve as ordained priests leading a kingdom of priests. Theological and practical considerations in the ministry of Word and Sacrament, and their relationship to ordained ministry, also receive attention.

The sociological context of early 21st-century North America, with its secularism and the perceived disenchantment of the world, factors into the PriestCraft formational process. A retrieval of the Reformational emphasis on the priesthood of all believers, and especially as priesthood is understood to include all vocations and culture-making, has tremendous missional potential. Secular people may re-envision the world for what it is, an enchanted creation, as they witness followers of Jesus approaching their vocations as sacred work, a holy offering. Thus, the profoundly missional character of the "royal priesthood" also provides necessary theological background for understanding the role of ordained Anglican presbyters leading a congregation of priests to be salt and light in the world. The research and writing of the curriculum explore these contexts for what it means to live the priestly vocation (both ordained and royal) faithfully in our day.

Research Questions

Given these background themes, this research-project will evaluate the impact of the PriestCraft curriculum, asking questions at the completion of the cohort such as: (1) Do aspiring and new Anglican priests have a biblical theological understanding of the priesthood? Can they

trace the theme of priesthood from the garden of Eden to the High Priesthood of Jesus, in which all His followers participate as a royal priesthood? (2) Do they understand the origins of ordination in the early church, and the nascent and suggestive language and practices found in the New Testament? (3) Does the PriestCraft curriculum help participants gain a theological vision of the full scope of human activity that Scripture frames as the priestly service of the whole people of God? (4) Does it help them to gain a theological vision for their own vocation as priests to a church that is called to be a kingdom of priests to the world? And have they developed some practical ideas for how to lead their congregation to live as priests of the world? (5) Do the participants gain an appreciation of the particular historical-theological shape and practice of Anglican priesthood, such that they are inspired and equipped to incorporate the Anglican priestly tradition into their vocational work?

The Goal of the Formational Process

The goal of the formational process is to help new Anglican clergy, especially those from a church and/or seminary background other than Anglicanism (1) understand a biblical theology of priesthood, tracing the theme through both Testaments, from the garden of Eden, to the tribe of Levi, to Jesus the great High Priest, and the whole people of God as a kingdom of priests; (2) articulate a basic theology of ordination to the priesthood, as a priest among a kingdom of priests; (3) consider how to lead parishioners into their priesthood; and (4) learn, practice, and reflect upon the ways that a biblical theology of priesthood shapes the call as ordained clergy, in pastoral service and leadership within a congregation. The final *telos* of the formational process is to make better priests, working within the ACNA, for the good of the world and the glory of God.

To summarize, this project is based on the identification of two problems. The first is that even though in the Anglican tradition pastors are called "priests," many new clergy are being ordained without much background in Anglicanism and its unique teachings and practices, within the Protestant world, of the priesthood. The other pressing need for this project is an undeveloped understanding of the biblical theology of priesthood within the ACNA, and most of the church, for that matter. While PriestCraft develops the rich biblical imagery of priesthood for Anglican clergy, its lessons are applicable to every minister of the gospel, regardless of church tradition. The biblical material is richly suggestive, robust in its reach, and inspiring for all who would be called to serve as an ordained minister within the kingdom of priests.

PriestCraft, a formational cohort spanning six months of learning experiences, attempts to address this problem by inviting six soon-to-be or recently ordained Anglican priests. The effectiveness of PriestCraft is then evaluated for future applications and improvements.

In the chapter that follows, I will provide a theological framework for PriestCraft by first tracing the theme of priesthood through all of Scripture, and then summarizing a biblical theology of ordination. Engaging with relevant literature, Chapter Three will explore "how does a robust biblical theology of priesthood apply to the vocation of ordained priests in ACNA?" Chapter Four then provides a detailed rationale and description of the project design, the pedagogical decisions made, and the research methods involved. Chapter Five discusses the conclusions and outcomes of the project—what worked especially well and what did not, what insights were gained into the cause and solutions to the problem—with recommendations for how PriestCraft might be improved for subsequent cohorts.

CHAPTER TWO

THE THEOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK

For the Christian, questions about life and ministry are occasions for theological investigation. "What shall we do in this or that situation?" often requires more than a simple pragmatic answer; it requires justification for the proposed action. *Why* should we do what we do, or choose what we choose? This quickly takes us into theological territory, inquiring into the character of God and what it means to be human. In a North American culture that often defaults to the question of "what" or "how" when investing time, energy, and resources into an effort, the question "why" is also desperately needed.[1] This is not only true for the North American culture in general, but also the church, which sometimes accommodates the pragmatism of the surrounding culture.

Gary Parrett and Steve Kang open their comprehensive volume on Christian education and formation suggesting, "Why? is nearly always the most critical of questions, yet it often remains unasked. We are impatient. We prefer to dive in with other questions, questions that strike us as being more relevant."[2] The "why" question is concerned with meaning, with the source and *telos* of creation and culture. As we embark on any effort in thought, speech, or action, we seek to ground it in the revelation of Holy Scripture and the received wisdom of the communion of saints, using our God-given abilities to reason. This is faith seeking understanding, then faithfully applied to our lives and endeavors. In our case, we will apply such

1. The "what" question seeks to define the goal with clarity, set target outcomes, and measure the results. The "how" question, in our technological age, seeks to bring maximum efficiency and efficacy to the means.

2. Gary A. Parrett and Steve Kang. *Teaching the Faith, Forming the Faithful: A Biblical Vision for Education in the Church* (Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity, 2009), 19.

theological reflection to humanity's general vocation to be priests of the world, and Anglican clergy's particular vocation to be priests of the church, or priests serving a kingdom of priests.

The theological framework for PriestCraft will first require a study of the four episodes of priesthood in the biblical narrative: Adam and Eve in the garden temple, Levitical priests, Jesus the great high priest, and the royal priesthood of all God's people. This overview will provide a biblical theology of priesthood that provides the foundation for a more synthetic reflection (in Chapter Three) on its contemporary relevance for today's royal and ordained priesthoods. Since all believers are priests in the new covenant, and since PriestCraft forms *ordained* priests to serve and lead the people of God into their priesthood, this chapter will conclude by articulating a brief theology of ordination.

Biblical Theology of Priesthood

The term PriestCraft has a double meaning, evoking a guild in which apprentice priests learn their craft, but also in which the priests themselves are being shaped, the crafted *poiema* (workmanship) of their Master. With the theological framework of the project's *context* now in view, we turn to the theological framework of the project's *content*, which centers on a biblical theology of priesthood as it applies to ordained Anglican ministry. The following section will reflect on the biblical-theological imagery of "priest" throughout Holy Scripture, on four central priestly roles along the way, and on a theology of ordination.

Priests as Mediators

What is a priest in the Bible? There is not one single passage or book of the Bible providing a comprehensive answer to this question. The term is applied to different individuals

and groups, with various emphases, accumulating layers of meaning throughout the millennia of the biblical record. But if one word might carry more freight of meaning that any other to describe biblical priesthood, it would be "mediator."[3] This is the work of priests in scripture, the mediators, the ones who stand between God and his creation, looking in both directions, representing one to the other.[4]

Leviticus 9 reports the first operational day of the Tabernacle, a clear example of the mediatorial role of the newly ordained priests, when Aaron receives instructions for how to offer sacrifices, follows them, and the glory of the Lord appears. These sacrifices are clearly *for the people*, on behalf of the Israelites as a whole. God communicates to the people, through the priest, what he desires. The priest then represents the people to God by offering their sacrifices, which they themselves have gathered and brought. "Then Aaron lifted up his hands toward the people and blessed them;" yet another move via the priest, this time God's blessing upon the people, in the ongoing interaction between God and his people. Then, finally, the scene ends as the "glory of the Lord appeared to all the people. And fire came out from before the Lord and consumed the burnt offering." The people then "shouted and fell on their faces."[5] The coming of the presence of God, in blazing glory, is the climax of the scene. This points to a central role of

3. While the prophets represent the Word of God to his people and the kings represent his rule, the mediatorial role is more definitional to priesthood, and more comprehensive. Though the offices of prophet, priest, and king are all intended to operate in the nexus of heaven and earth, in representative ways, priesthood is inclusive of more categories than the office of either prophet or king. In fact, the role of the priest, as will be shown below, even includes elements of the prophetic and kingly roles. This is not to conflate the *Munus Triplex* into one office, but to recognize priesthood as the most expansive of the three.

4. In Roman mythology there is a god named Janus with two faces on his one head, each looking in the opposite direction from the other. He is the god positioned in the in-between spaces, the god of beginnings and endings, who can face the future and the past, both the enemy and the ally, the heavens and the earth. Janus is also a term used metaphorically in biblical exegesis for verses that connect the previous pericope to the next, looking back and forward, tying the two together.

5. Leviticus 9:22-24. All scripture quotations are taken from the English Standard Version (ESV) of the Bible unless otherwise noted.

priests in scripture, to facilitate safe encounter between the holy God and his people. This is but one example, a paradigmatic example, of priests as mediators.

The Language of Priesthood

The term "priest" is complicated in contemporary use, not only because of its various meanings in Scripture, but also throughout church history, and in the English language in particular. In order to discuss priesthood then and now, we must have a clear understanding of the term, and what we mean by the term.

It is quite straightforward in the Bible; the word *kohen* is the Hebrew term for "priest," used consistently through the entire Old Testament, with the Levitical priests and their roles as outlined in the Pentateuch in view. This is the imagery that is most familiar to readers of the Bible, men charged with administrating the sacrificial system and the laws we find especially in Leviticus, their work primarily associated with the tabernacle and temple, vested differently from the rest of Israel, set apart. Priests in the Old Testament held a peculiar office within Israel as religious authorities.

In the New Testament, likewise, there is only one Greek word, *hiereus*, used for "priest." At times, the term is used simply as the Greek translation of *kohen*, referring to the same Jewish religious authorities described above. But, after the life, death, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus Christ, *hiereus* is then applied to him as the great High Priest who has completed and fulfilled the purpose of all previous priests. Furthermore, because he has united to himself all who repent and believe, *all* his followers are now *hiereus* in the new covenant. Because we are in him, the whole church shares in his priesthood. This is part of the good news of the kingdom, that *all God's people share in Jesus' priesthood.*

We do not see in the New Testament any application of the term "priest" to specific leaders or officeholders in the newly born church. There are no examples in the New Testament of the term "priest," or *hiereus*, being applied to an office of ministry. One of the most respected Anglican scholars and churchmen of the 20th Century, the Rt. Rev. Bishop Stephen Neill, observes,

> Many names are used of offices and functions in the Church—*apostle, prophet, evangelist, episcopos, diaconos*, and the like. But in all the lists and references, the word *hiereus, priest, is never used once* of a functionary of the Christian Church. Christ is the heavenly high-priest; the whole body of Christians is a royal priesthood, all Christians are kings and priests unto God. But no Christian is ever called a priest. Analogies between the Levitical and Christian priesthoods are found from 1 Clement onwards; but I believe I am right in saying that the first unmistakable identification of the Christian *ministry* with the Christian *priesthood* is to be found in Hippolytus at the beginning of the third century.[6]

Bishop Neill lists a sampling of names that "are used of office and functions in the Church," not meant to be comprehensive. One that he does not mention, very relevant to our discussion, is the term "presbyter," which in the New Testament refers to a leader of a local gathering of believers, usually in homes. The word *presbyter* has no etymological connection to either *kohen* or *hiereus*, nor does it derive its functions from the unique demands and privileges of the priestly class of Israel. Simply put, the *presbyter* was not thought of as a "priest."[7]

Here is where the accidents of history confuse the matter in the English language. As the word *presbyter* was used in English, it morphed and contracted to become "priest," the same word English speakers use when referring to the *kohen* of Israel.

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6. Stephen Neill, ed., *The Ministry of the Church* (London: Canterbury Press, 1947), 10, italics in original.

7. It is worth noting, however, that while the term "priest" is not used of New Testament spiritual leaders (i.e. presbyters) they nevertheless carried forward many of the priestly purposes of the Levitical priesthood, as ministers among God's people. The *role* of New Testament spiritual leaders was priestly, even if the terminology was not used. I owe this observation to a conversation with the Rev. Dr. Nathan Baxter.

Though the word "priest" is not applied to an office of Christian leadership in the New Testament, the Anglican church may use this term robustly, defining it with its full blossom of canonical implications. Ordained ministers are in clear continuity with the priestly biblical tradition, servants of both God and his people, mediating between them. Clergy are an ordained priesthood for the sake of the royal priesthood, together a "kingdom of priests."[8]

As I elaborate below on the full biblical range of what it means to be priests, it will become apparent that this imagery is a vital and beautiful facet of what it means to be human. The congregational leader, the ordained Anglican minister, may rightly be called a "priest" as the community's exemplar and facilitator of what the community itself is called to be. If we are all priests to the world, which I will demonstrate to be the case, then the ordained Anglican minister is priest to the "kingdom of priests." Put another way, the church is the priest of the world, and ordained Anglican ministers are the priests of the church, ordained priests serving the royal priesthood.[9] Now, what exactly does that mean? We have to turn to the whole biblical narrative to find out.

The Four Main Episodes of Priesthood in the Biblical Narrative

In the opening chapters of Genesis and the closing chapters of Revelation, and everywhere between, we find priestly imagery.[10] Throughout the biblical story God longs to be

8. Exodus 19:5-6

9. For the sake economic and clear writing, I will not qualify the assertion of our priesthood, every time it's made, by clarifying that neither the church nor the ordained Anglican minister has a priesthood unto themselves. It is always derivative. To be theological precise, Jesus is the priest of the world, and the priest of the church, but he has invited us to share in his priesthood, both in the world and in the church.

10. After designing and implementing PriestCraft based on these four main episodes of priesthood in the biblical narrative, I discovered Andrew Malone's outstanding work, *God's Mediators: A Biblical Theology of Priesthood* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2017). I wish it had been available before the design of PriestCraft, but (1) his similar breakdown and articulation of the biblical episodes and roles priesthood corroborate my findings, and (2) I have incorporated some of his additional insights in this section.

with his creation, to dwell with and among them. These dwelling places are "in-between" places; they are where heaven and earth meet.[11] As heaven-and-earth places, they are therefore also the places where God chooses priests to be mediators, to facilitate the connection between God and his creation, representing one to the other.

The priestly imagery in the Bible begins with (1) Adam and Eve, priests in the garden-temple, after which we see (2) the establishment of the Aaronic-Levitical priests, serving in the tabernacle and temple, followed by (3) Jesus, the Great High Priest, who is himself the temple and dwelling place of God, and finally (4) the church, the royal priesthood who, in Christ, are the temple and dwelling place of God. These are the four episodes of priesthood in the Bible. Each of them displays some kind of mediatorial role, either representing God to creation or vice versa, or both.

How do priests mediate between God and his creation? None of these four episodes of priesthood perform the exact same mediatorial functions; they overlap in some ways, are distinct in others, but collectively the roles and functions of the priests of scripture can be summarized in the following categories: making oblation, dealing in matters of holiness, communicating God's Word and ours, and bearing witness.[12] I will expound below upon each of these four priestly roles, which I have termed the priestly quadrilateral. These categories of priestly work form the very heart of PriestCraft, the organizing outline and structure of the project. But before we look

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11. The primary dwellings places of God in the biblical story are the garden, tabernacle, temple, Jesus, and the church.

12. Just as we can say that no particular instantiation of priesthood, say, Adam and Eve, exhibits *all* four mediatorial functions, likewise no particular function is always bidirectional. Some functions lend themselves more to the priest representing God to creation, or vice versa. In oblation, for example, the priest is representing any and all aspects of creation, human and non-human, to God. In matters of holiness the priest is mostly representing humanity, especially God's people. In God's Word and Ours, the priest is representing both God and creation to each other. In bearing witness the priest is mostly representing God to creation.

in depth at how priests are called to exhibit these four roles of priesthood, we must first take a closer look at *who* these priests are in the biblical story, and the continuity of the priestly thread, from Adam and Eve to the church.

Episode One: Adam and Eve, Priests in the Garden-Temple

Adam and Eve are the first priests. We see this in (1) the design and structure of the garden, which reflect temple imagery; (2) their divine mandate; and (3) their actions. In this section I will give more attention to defending the designation of Adam and Eve as priests since, among the four episodes of priesthood in the Bible, Adam and Eve are the only ones not explicitly called "priests."[13]

Adam and Eve are the first priests, who live and work in the garden of Eden, the first dwelling place of God. Throughout scripture the temple is the place where God dwells, whether referring to its mobile version in the tabernacle, its fixed location in Jerusalem, or its embodied version in Jesus and the church. "Temple" is where the presence of the holy God dwells among his people. Gregory Beale writes, "Israel's temple was the place where Israel's priest experienced God's unique presence, and Eden was the place where Adam walked and talked with God. The same Hebrew verbal form (stem) *mithallek* (hithpael) used for God's 'walking back and forth' in the Garden (Gen. 3:8) also describes God's presence in the tabernacle."[14] In Leviticus 26:12, for

13. Throughout this project, when referring to Adam and Eve as priests in the garden I will speak of them both, persuaded by Andrew Malone, who writes, "I speak of Adam and Eve together. The initial description of the garden and God's commissions appear to concern only 'the man' (2:5-17), with his female counterpart not yet fashioned. But Davidson (2015: 72, n.21) rightly notes that both she and the serpent readily understand her to be *bound by those same commissions: note the plural terms in 3:1-5*." Andrew S. Malone, *God's Mediators: A Biblical Theology of Priesthood* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2017) 52, emphasis mine. This work by Andrew Malone is an excellent addition to the New Studies in Biblical Theology series, and the most comprehensive biblical theology of priesthood to date and, therefore, consulted and cited frequently in this project.

14. G. K. Beale, *The Temple and the Church's Mission: A Biblical Theology of the Temple* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2004), 66.

instance, God says, "I will walk among you and will be your God, and you shall be my people."[15]

Beale shows that many design and structural features of the garden are mirrored in the tabernacle/temple.[16] He identifies the following parallels between the Garden and the Temple: The Garden as the place of the first guardian cherubim; The Garden as the place of the first arboreal lamp stand; The Garden as formative for garden imagery in Israel's temple; Eden as the first source of water; The Garden as the place of precious stones; The Garden as the place of the first mountain; The Garden as the first place of wisdom; The Garden as the first place with an eastern facing entrance; The Garden as part of a tripartite sacred structure; Ezekiel's view of the Garden of Eden as the first sanctuary; The Ancient Near Eastern connect of temples in association with garden-like features; and Early Judaism's view of the garden as the first sanctuary.[17] Beale points out that while each of these parallels carry different weight, it's the cumulative total that persuades.

While Beale's work on this is extensive and well-known, he is hardly alone in making the connection between garden and the temple imagery throughout scripture. Old Testament scholar Andrew Malone notes,

> In what may be a rare consensus concerning Genesis 1-2, the last few decades have seen wide acceptance of the idea that the descriptions of creation are shaped by concerns for sacred space. In particular, the garden of Eden is presented as the sanctuary within which

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15. See also Deuteronomy 23:14-15; 2 Samuel 7:6-7.

16. One might wonder how, chronologically speaking, the garden might reflect the tabernacle/temple, which came at a later date. But it's not so much the tabernacle/temple that influenced the imagery of the garden, as the fact that both are shaped by the eschatological convergence of God's people, dwelling in God's presence, in the provision of God's place, in the new heavens and the new earth. The beginning and middle of the story both reflect the eternal *telos* toward which all creation is headed. For a full argumentation of this perspective, see J. Ryan Lister, *The Presence of God: Its Place in the Storyline of Scripture and the Story of Our Lives* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2015), 66ff.

17. Beale, *The Temple and the Church's Mission*, 66-79.

> God dwells locally, and the sanctuary is considered complete when the deity's representative 'image' is installed.[18]

We see features of priesthood not only through the parallels of conceptual design, and through the parallel language of God walking in the garden, but also in Adam and Eve's vocational mandate. Adam and Eve are charged, in regard to the garden of Eden, to "be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth."[19] Later, significantly, they are told to "work it and keep it" (work is sometimes translated as cultivate or serve, and keep as guard).[20] This is their mandate, their priestly vocation in the garden. This word-pair, "work" and "keep," appear together elsewhere in the Old Testament, always referring to serving God, keeping his word and commandments, or keeping guard over the tabernacle.[21] The vocation Adam and Even have been given in the garden is to be priests in the garden temple, representing the presence of God in his creation.

Genesis 1:28 and 2:15 are often referred to as the Cultural Mandate, that is, to cultivate creation and make culture, as image-bearers. Just as a king would put an image of himself in distant lands of his kingdom, representing his rule and reign, so Adam and Eve bear the image of the God in his created realm. They are vice-regents, ruling in his place, charged with working and keeping it just as their Sovereign would, not for their own exploitation.

One specific way we are told that Adam does just that is in the naming of the animals. Just as his Creator, whose image he bears, spoke creation into existence, so does Adam exercise

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18. Malone, *God's Mediators*, 47.

19. Genesis 1:28.

20. Genesis 2:15.

21. Beale, *The Temple and the Church's Mission*, 81.

delegated authority to speak identity, lovingly and imaginatively, to God's creatures. God "brought them [every animal] to the man to see what he would call them. And whatever the man called every living creature, that was its name."[22] In the cultivation of creation and culture, exemplified here in the image-bearing act of naming the animals, Adam and Eve are offering up to God his creation. They represent creation to God, offering it up as a kind of oblation. We will discuss further the priestly act of making oblation below, but Genesis 1-2 read in the canonical context show the first priests mediating between God and creation. They demonstrate the person and character of God to all creation as they bear his image, lovingly working and keeping the garden-temple on his behalf, and making oblation of creation by naming it and displaying its glory back to its Creator.

Interlude: The Patriarchs

One note regarding the patriarchal period, between the episodes of Edenic and Levitical priesthood, is worth mentioning and illustrating with an extended quote.[23] Echoes of Adam and Eve as priests in the garden-temple, the dwelling place of God, reverberate into the patriarchal era. Beale makes the unique and convincing observation that,

> Commentators apparently have not noticed something very interesting: that the Adamic commission is repeated in direct connection with what looks to be the building of small sanctuaries. Just as the Genesis 1:28 commission was initially to be carried out by Adam in a localized place, enlarging the borders of the arboreal sanctuary, so it appears to be not accidental that the restatement of the commission to Israel's patriarchs results in the following: (1) God appearing to them (except in Gen. 12:8; 13:3-4); (2) they 'pitch' a *tent* literally a 'tabernacle' in LXX); (3) on a mountain; (4) they build altars and worship God (i.e., 'calling on the name of the Lord,' which probably included sacrificial offerings and prayer . . . at the place of the restatement); (5) the place where these activities occur is

22. Genesis 2:19.

23. The first appearance of *kohen*, the Hebrew word for "priest," appears among the patriarchs in Abraham's encounter with Melchizedek, a priest-king who shows him hospitality. Given the brevity of this episode and the more prominent theological reflection on Melchizedek in the book of Hebrews, his place in our understanding of biblical priesthood will be discussed in the section on Jesus as our great high priest.

> often located at 'Bethel'—the 'House of God' (the only case of altar-building not containing these elements nor linked to the Genesis 1 commission is Gen. 33:20). The combination of these five elements occurs elsewhere in the Old Testament only in describing Israel's tabernacle or temple![24]

A location where God dwells among his people, who make oblation and worship him—these features don't add up to the later cumulative fullness of biblical priesthood, but a growing concept of priesthood flows from the garden-temple of Eden, here through the patriarchs, and into the formal commissioning of the Levitical priests at Mount Sinai.

Episode Two: Levitical Priests

Aaron, from the tribe of Levi, was the first High Priest. His family and their descendants are commissioned at Sinai to serve as priests in the tabernacle and, later, the temple. The Levitical priesthood is the second episode of priestly imagery in the biblical narrative, supplying the most expansive meaning and biblical content to what it means to be a priest. Previous and future episodes of priesthood will show some distinct shades of meaning or different emphases, but even the description and meaning of Jesus as the consummate priest relies on the contextual understanding of priesthood in the history of Israel. The meaning of Jesus as the Great High Priest is embedded in the historical, sociological, and theological import of the entire Old Testament, and Levitical priesthood in particular. To be sure, Jesus' priesthood takes meaning from Adam and Eve as well; he is the second Adam. Jesus' priesthood also draws from Melchizedek. Whereas the stories of Adam and Melchizedek occupy just a few chapters, however, the story of the Levitical priests spans many books and centuries, with detailed definition and description.

24. Beale, *The Temple and the Church's Mission*, 96.

After the Exodus from Egypt, Israel spent roughly eleven months at Mt. Sinai, a relatively brief amount of time in the span of centuries covered by the Pentateuch. But the events that occurred while Israel was stationary during those eleven months comprise a full third of the Pentateuch.[25] Here God gave careful instructions for the construction of the tabernacle, the mobile dwelling place of God among his people.

Exodus 19-24 establishes the close connection, the proximity, that God desires with his treasured and chosen people Israel. It is unsurprising, then, to find priestly imagery and references, though undeveloped, in these chapters before the more comprehensive outline of priestly and tabernacle descriptions to come in chapter 25 and following. This section gives one of the clearest glimpses in the Pentateuch, next to Genesis 12, of Israel's missional call, promising to make Israel a kingdom of priests to the world.[26] That is, *all* Israel will represent God to the rest of humanity, their nation a witness to all nations. We also see Moses, a pre-cursor to the priesthood God will soon establish, represent God to the people who upon seeing the lightning and thunder that accompanied the glory of God on the mountain, "stood far off and said to Moses, 'You speak to us and we will listen, but do not let God speak to us, lest we die.'"[27] Moses assumes a proto-priestly role as mediator between God and his people.

The amount of attention to detail and the volume of instructions regarding priests and the tabernacle indicate how central was the role, for priests, of managing proximity and mediating matters of holiness between God and humanity. Much of Exodus, Leviticus, and Numbers are

25. Malone, *God's Mediators*, 14.

26. God promises to make Abraham and his descendants a blessing to all nations (Genesis 12:1-3).

27. Exodus 20:18-19.

given to providing these instructions. Malone provides a simple overview of the chapters and books that systematically establish the Levitical priesthood:

- Within its larger section prescribing and describing the construction of the tabernacle and its furnishings (Exod. 25-40), Exodus 28-29 focuses directly on the priests, their dress code, and their commissioning.
- Leviticus 1-7 outlines the sacrifices that the priests oversee.
- Leviticus 8-10 deals with the formal ordination of the priests.
- The remainder of Leviticus is concerned with various aspects of Israelite behavior, for which the priesthood has substantial responsibility.
- Other priestly responsibilities are found in subsequent books, not least the opening chapters of the adjacent book of Numbers.[28]

This episode of priesthood in the biblical story establishes several key elements of priestly imagery, and purposes of priesthood itself. First and foremost, God wants to be with his people:

> [Exodus 29] reminds the reader of the whole point of having priests to serve in God's consecrated tent. 'I will dwell in the midst of the Israelites, and I will be their God' (29:45). The final verse likewise repeats God's desire to 'dwell' (*sakan*) among them; not only does this summarize the purpose of the tabernacle (25:8) but God confirms here that this was the purpose of the entire exodus rescue (29:46)![29]

But the unholy people are not able to approach the holiness of God safely without an intermediary, a representative who is authorized and ritually cleansed, who makes sacrifices on his own behalf first, and then on behalf of the people. Intimately tied to God's desire to dwell with his people is the need for someone to facilitate this proximity, to approach the holy God appropriately. Someone is also needed to assist the people in making their thank offerings and sin offerings so that, through the sacrifice of another, they might be reconciled with their God. These are the offerings of the whole people of Israel, via the priest, so that the distinctly holy God and the distinctly unholy people can live in each other's joyful and peaceful company.

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28. Malone, *God's Mediators*, 16.

29. Malone, *God's Mediators*, 28.

The Levitical priests are also teachers, communicating God's law to his people, and involved in decision-making and discernment of God's voice and will, on behalf of the people.[30] They not only teach Israel God's Word, but also pronounce his blessing upon Israel.[31] Priests carry the twelve tribes of Israel on their heart as they enter the presence of God, figuratively and literally, by wearing twelve symbolic stones sewn into their vestments (the ephod). Priests carry God's word to the people and carry the people and their needs into the presence of God.

We also see the beginning of the High Priestly role, with the establishment of the Levitical priesthood, first by Aaron then by the successor heads of his family after him, on down through the generations. The High Priest is the only one who can enter all the way into the tabernacle, into the Holy of Holies, and the one who is responsible for purifying and "resetting" the cultic system, the tabernacle, and its practices annually on the Day of Atonement. These Levitical priests, descended from the line of Aaron, continue for centuries until the time of Jesus.[32]

Interlude: The Historical and Prophetic Books

Between the priestly episodes of the commissioning of Levitical priests and Jesus the Great High Priest, we see a long stretch of failures of the priesthood. The state of Israel's holiness hits a low point at the end of the period of Judges, which concludes with the lament that, "In those days Israel had no king; everyone did as they saw fit."[33] This statement, combined with the dearth of references to priests or priestly activity of any kind, suggests that priests might

30. Leviticus 10:10-11.

31. As mentioned above in the section on "Priests as Mediators," and overlapping with the prophetic office.

32. Jesus himself was not of the Levitical line, however. He was a priest after the order of Melchizedek.

33. Judges 21:25.

not have been teaching God's law to his people. The book of 1 Samuel opens with the story of Eli's priestly household, but with sons who are described as "worthless men," who "treated the offering of the Lord with contempt," and "lay with women you were serving at the entrance to the tent of meeting."[34] There seems to be a transition in the narrative here, not just from one generation of priest to another, but from one form of national leadership to another, from priestly authority to the authority of prophets and kings. The priesthood persists but, with some exceptions, in a corrupt state. Malachi, the last book and prophet of the Old Testament, voices God's judgment upon the priests, naming what priests were supposed to be—such as teachers of God's instruction—but have failed to uphold in their calling:

> My covenant with him [Levi] was one of life and peace, and I gave them to him. It was a covenant of fear, and he feared me. He stood in awe of my name. True instruction was in his mouth, and no wrong was found on his lips. He walked with me in peace and uprightness, and he turned many from iniquity. For the lips of a priest should guard knowledge, and people should seek instruction from his mouth, for he is the messenger of the Lord of hosts. But you have turned aside from the way. You have caused many to stumble by your instruction. You have corrupted the covenant of Levi, says the Lord of hosts, and so I make you despised and abased before all the people, inasmuch as you do not keep my ways but show partiality in your instruction.[35]

Despite the failures of the priests during this period, Israel's future continues to be framed in priestly imagery.[36] Her future will combine both priestly and royal imagery in a way that we also saw before the commissioning of the Levitical priests, such as with Adam and Eve bearing the image of their Sovereign, given the mandate of dominion and rule over creation as vice-

34. Judges 2:12-22.

35. Malachi 2:5-9. One angle of a biblical theology of priesthood that would be fruitful to explore more in depth, but beyond the scope of this study, is all the failures of the priests. We often gain clarity about what we seek to clarify when we see its foil. This can also have the pedagogical effect of warning us to avoid the same pitfalls if and when they threaten.

36. Malone, *God's Mediators*, 90. Throughout his book, Malone follows a consensus that the role of king and priest are largely overlapping and that, between the two, priest is the larger category, encompassing more of what kings were supposed to do than vice versa. The same could be said for the relationship between the role of priest and prophet, with priest being the larger category. Jesus is, of course, the fulfillment of all three.

regents. Ultimately, this merging of royal and priestly vocations will be restated in John's Revelation, which envisions God's eschatological people as holy kings and priests of the new heavens and the new earth.[37]

Episode Three: Jesus the Great High Priest

The third episode of priesthood is Jesus.[38] He is never called a priest in the gospels because that term would have been used only as a technical term for temple priests, of the tribe of Levi and descended from Aaron, who carried out the temple duties and sacrifices. However, there are echoes and allusions in the gospels to the priestly role of Jesus. The Transfiguration, for example, echoes Mt. Sinai in Exodus, this time a new mountaintop theophany, with suggestions of a new tabernacle (Peter's desire to set up tents), and with Jesus as the new High Priest who receives commissioning and validation from Yahweh.[39]

John 17 records the prayer of Jesus, as his crucifixion loomed near. It is often called the High Priestly prayer because of the clear mediatorial role, not only representing his disciples in prayer, but also all those who will believe in him through the apostolic witness. He is an intermediary, interceding with priestly imagery; he asks the Father to "*sanctify* them in your truth," and uses commissioning language, "as you sent me into the world, so I have sent them

37. In Revelation 5:10, for example, celestial creatures sing to God about God's ransomed people: "You have made them a kingdom and priests to our God, and they shall reign on the earth."

38. As is evident below, Jesus is both implicitly portrayed as, and explicitly called, a priest in the New Testament. However, one of the challenges of defining his priesthood is that priests were only one part of the whole cultic system, but Jesus fulfills not just a part but the whole. Jesus is a priest, but also the God to whom priests point, and he is the sacrifice that is offered, and the blessing that priests pronounce and he is the Law that priests teach, and the temple that priests maintain.

39. Matthew 17:1-9. The insight to these parallels and more come from: Alastair Roberts, "Seeing the Transfigured Word" (lecture, England L'Abri, Greatham, July 29, 2018), accessed June 28, 2019.

into the world;" and then extending the semantic field of holiness he says, "for their sake I *consecrate* myself, that they also may be *sanctified* in truth."[40]

The priestly vocation echoes again in the life and teachings of Jesus in the several references to Jesus as facilitating *access* to the presence of God. Jesus, in reference to himself, says "the gate is narrow and the way is hard"; and "I am the way, the truth, and the life"; and in the epistles he is called "the new and living way"; and it is "through him we both have access in one Spirit to the Father," reminiscent of the Levitical high priests who alone had a divine access in the Holy of Holies.[41]

One does not have to rely on allusions and echoes, however, to recognize Jesus as heir of all the Old Testament priestly imagery. The high priesthood of Jesus is the main idea of the entire book of Hebrews. The sermon builds up to the announcement of this theme in the first third of the book, spends the middle third of the book teaching about Jesus' priesthood, and then for the final third turns to the pastoral application of Jesus' priesthood.[42] Jesus is not just next in line, he is the fulfillment of *all* that the priesthood was meant to be, the final priest who makes the final all-sufficient sacrifice, teaches all the commandments of God and, in fact, is the very Word of God itself and, finally, makes eternal intercession for humanity.

One of the strong Christological themes of Hebrews is the humanity of Jesus; he is fully human and therefore the perfect representative of humanity. He is the Son of Man, the truly human one. "For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses,

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40. John 17:17-19. There might also be sacrificial allusions in this statement, with "consecrate myself" a possible reference to his self-sacrifice.

41. Matthew 7:13-14; John 14:6; Hebrews 10:20; Ephesians 2:18 are quoted. This is not a comprehensive list of references but shows the consistency of these allusions. See also Ephesians 3:12; Romans 5:2; Hebrews 10:19, 2 Peter 1:11.

42. Malone, *God's Mediators*, 110. Hebrews 4:14-16 and 10:19-25 are structural markers of the explanation and application of Jesus' priesthood.

but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin," proclaims the preacher, and "although he was a son, he learned obedience through what he suffered."[43] These passages that establish so firmly his humanity are often taught, rightfully so, to show why Jesus is the perfect sacrifice. But they deserve more attention also for how his consummate humanity qualify him to be the priest that ends all cultic priesthoods. He is able to perfectly represent his human brothers and sisters before the face of God. Further attention to the humanity of Jesus in light of his priesthood, not just his self-sacrifice, causes us to look more closely at this facet of the atonement. In his humanity, and as the perfect great High Priest, the whole people of God enter into the presence of God, into the Holy of Holies with him. Closely connected to this idea is Jesus as the second Adam, the fully human one who perfectly makes oblation of the world. He also makes perfect oblation himself, living in God's unbroken presence, walking and living in perfect communion with God.

The book of Hebrews also makes exceedingly clear the divinity of Jesus.[44] The opening words of Hebrews represent some of the highest Christology of the New Testament, proclaiming him as "the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power. After making purifications for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty."[45] Jesus represents the glory and nature of God to humanity and is his messenger. "In these last days he has spoken to us by his Son."[46] Jesus perfectly represents

43. Hebrews 4:15; 5:8.

44. Malone, *God's Mediators*, 111.

45. Hebrews 1:3.

46. Hebrews 1:2.

humanity to God, and God to humanity. Malone summarizes Jesus' superiority to all other priests:

> Yes, the high priest gained access to God's presence—but only for himself and but once a year. Jesus is thoroughly able to save those who approach God through him. Yes, Aaron and his descendants sometimes interposed themselves to curtail God's plagues. Jesus is always living in order to intercede. … A primary function of the Levitical priests was to differentiate between the holy and common, between the unclean and clean. Jesus (and the better sacrifice he administers as part of the better covenant) *makes* holy and cleanses. … Where the Levitical priest was to teach God's commandments, in these last days God has spoken definitively by the Son. … Where high standards of holiness were set for the high priest (and thence the priests and then the people), and though each still sinned…our great high priest is "holy, blameless, undefiled, separated from sinners and exalted above the heavens!"[47]

The preacher in Hebrews also claims the superiority of Jesus' priesthood because he is a priest in the order of Melchizedek, not Aaron. Melchizedek was an intriguing figure who was both "king of Salem" and "priest of God Most High," known for righteousness and peace, who blessed Abram with "bread and wine."[48] This priestly line is superior because Melchizedek has no genealogy. His priesthood is not inherited from a human line but appointed directly by God and has no end.[49]

The preacher in Hebrews does not present this picture of Jesus as an abstract theological idea, but as practical and life-altering truth, making the point explicitly that "we have confidence to enter the holy places by the blood of Jesus, by the new and living way that he opened for us through the curtain, that is, through his flesh, … we have a great high priest over the house of God, let us . . .."[50] Three things then follow the injunction "let us"— three implications of the

47. Malone, *God's Mediators*, 114-115.

48. Genesis 14:18-19; Hebrews 7:2. It is also noteworthy that "Salem" is what would later be called Jerusalem, the site of Israel's Temple and place of service of many future priests.

49. Hebrews 7:3.

50. Hebrews 10:19-21.

great high priesthood of Jesus. Let us (1) "draw near with a true heart"; (2) "hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering"; and (3) "consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together."[51] No barrier to the presence of God remains. Guilt is removed. Access is granted. The blazing glory of God shines upon us. His word, compelling and clear, is communicated. There is now every reason to live confidently and hopefully in the very presence of God, persevere through trials, and for his love to flow through us and into loving relationship with others. We are "save[d] to the uttermost."[52] This incredible gift of new life is not just achieved by long-ago historical deeds of Jesus. He continues, even now; Jesus "lives to make intercession for them [those who draw near to him]."[53]

Episode Four: Royal Priesthood

The fourth and final episode of priesthood in the biblical narrative is the church, who receive this priesthood on two counts. First, the church receives this priesthood in continuity from Adam and Eve, the Levitical priests, and Jesus. The church is next in the line of succession, heir to the cumulative call of priesthood. She is not the apex of the call, however. Jesus is the fulfillment and apex of priesthood, with the priesthood of the church being derivative from him. The church as the royal priesthood, has a mediatorial role in the world, the whole world. From Adam and Eve's vocation as priests to God's designation of Israel as a "kingdom of priests" at Sinai, the call upon God's people to represent him to the world is evident.[54] What Levitical

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51. Hebrews 10:19-24.

52. Hebrews 7:25.

53. Hebrews 7:25.

54. Exodus 19:5-6. There is a strong link between the promise to Abram, "I will bless you…and in you all

priests were to Israel, the people of Israel were to be to all creation: mediators who face creation, facilitating the presence and glory of God on the one hand, and, facing God, bring the concerns and offerings of the world to him, on the other. Malone notes how Philo, in *On the Life of Moses* written around the time of Jesus, comments that God had long ago chosen Moses' people "out of all the other nations to be priests perpetually offering prayers on behalf of the race of humans."[55]

This priestly call, with a special focus on Israel's call to be a light to the nations, persists through the rest of the Old Testament, especially in the Psalms and prophets.[56] This mission is all-encompassing of creation. We see Adam and Eve charged with the care of land and animals and hear from the apostle Paul of creation groaning as it awaits the new heavens and the new earth. We also find a delightful reference to God's redemptive concern for non-human creation in the prophet Jonah, as he declares: "And should not I pity Nineveh, that great city, in which there are more than 120,000 persons who do not know their right hand from their left, *and also much cattle?*"[57] Part of Israel's priestly call was to participate in God's redemption of all creation. The church, as God's people in the new covenant, are called to the same.

While on the one hand, the church receives her priesthood *from* Jesus, as next in the line of succession, she receives her priesthood more significantly *in* Jesus. The priesthood of Jesus is not relinquished and handed off to the church. Jesus *remains* the great high priest eternally, having ascended to the right hand of the Father. The church's priesthood is received by

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families of the earth shall be blessed," and the promise to Moses, "You shall be to me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation" (Genesis 12:3; Exodus 19:6).

55. *God's Mediators*, 134.

56. Christopher J. H. Wright, *The Mission of God: Unlocking the Bibles Grand Narrative* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2008), 484-500.

57. Jonah 4:11.

participation in him. We are in Christ, and he is in us. Our priesthood is actively, now and forever, participatory.[58]

This is our baptismal identity, a people who have been united to Christ. Paul, writing the church in Rome, makes this explicit, "Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? … For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his."[59] Paul hits this note again—our union in Christ—in his letter to the church in Galatia: "I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me."[60] This is the astounding mercy and mystery of Christian faith, that through union with Christ, we share in the identity, ministry, and mission of Jesus Christ.

Christians are participants in the work of Jesus, representing God to the world and the world to God, every one of us. This is not only for the ordained, a ministerial priesthood; this is the baptismal priesthood of every believer. Theologian Thomas Torrance writes, "Baptism…is the Sacrament of the general or corporate priesthood of the Church, for it is through Baptism that we are incorporated into the Body of Christ and are inserted into the ministry of His Body. All who are baptised into Christ are baptised into the Royal Priesthood."[61]

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58. There has been much recent interest within Protestantism in a recovery of the doctrine of union with Christ and, relatedly, the Christian life as participation in Christ. See, for example, J. Todd Billings, *Union with Christ: Reframing Theology and Ministry for the Church* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2011); Constantine R. Campbell, *Paul and Union with Christ: an Exegetical and Theological Study* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2012); Julie Canlis, *Calvin's Ladder: a Spiritual Theology of Ascent and Ascension* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 2010); Robert Letham, *Union with Christ: in Scripture, History, and Theology* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R Publishing, 2011); Rankin Wilbourne, *Union with Christ: the Way to Know and Enjoy God* (Colorado Springs: David C. Cook, 2018).

59. Romans 6:3-5.

60. Galatians 2:20.

61. Thomas Forsyth Torrance, *Royal Priesthood: A Theology of Ordained Ministry* (London: Continuum T & T Clark, 2003), 74.

Scripture's most explicit identification of the church as a royal priesthood comes in Peter's first epistle, where he speaks of the church as a spiritual house built of living stones, a holy and royal priesthood, with Jesus being the cornerstone:

> You yourselves like living stones are being built up as a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. For it stands in Scripture: "Behold, I am laying in Zion a stone, a cornerstone chosen and precious, and whoever believes in him will not be put to shame." So the honor is for you who believe, but for those who do not believe, "The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone," and "A stone of stumbling, and a rock of offense." They stumble because they disobey the word, as they were destined to do. But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.[62]

Jesus the great High Priest, is the cornerstone of our priesthood. As Malone points out, and is widely accepted, these verses contained within the pericope of 1 Peter 2:4-10 are a hinge between two major sections of the epistle, the first concerned with the identity of the church and the second with practical implications and instructions.[63] Verses 4-10 are the climax of the description of the church's identity, with priestly imagery at the center. Verses 11-12 then articulate the missional and ethical implications of that priestly identity: "Keep your conduct among the Gentiles [the nations] honorable, so that when they speak against you as evildoers, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day of visitation."[64] The church is to bear witness to the nations, that they too might glorify God.

We also see the church referred to as a kingdom of priests in Revelation. The book opens with the stunning announcement, "To him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood—indeed, he has made us to be a kingdom, priests for his God and Father—to him be the

62. 1 Peter 2:5-9.

63. Malone, *God's Mediators*, 152.

64. 1 Peter 2:12.

glory."[65] Revelation 5 likewise references, in a song of praise, Jesus' sacrificial purchase of the church, then adds, "and you have made them for our God, a kingdom and priests and they will reign upon the earth."[66] And lastly, in chapter 20, all those who have "a share in the first resurrection," will be "priests of God and of Christ and will reign with him for a thousand years."[67] In the new heavens and the new earth, God's people will represent God in their care for all creation. They will also represent creation to God as they offer it all up to him, voicing creation's praise.

Conclusion of the Biblical Theology of Priesthood

This biblical-theological story of priesthood suggests that the various roles of priests in Scripture can be distilled to the following priestly quadrilateral: making oblation, mediating matters of holiness, facilitating presence and communication with God, and bearing witness.

A Theology of Ordination

Though we have seen that the ministry and calling of the Levitical priesthood is expanded to the whole people of God, the royal priesthood, there remain distinct offices of spiritual leadership in the New Testament. These leaders are most commonly referred to in English as "pastors." In the New Testament, they are called "presbyters." As discussed above, however, the most common Anglican term for the ordained spiritual leader is "priest," an English contraction of "presbyter." A biblical category remains for those who are set apart for spiritual leadership in

65. Revelation 1:5-6.

66. Revelation 5:9-10.

67. Revelation 20:6.

the church, a distinction in Anglicanism between the "ordained priesthood" and the "royal priesthood." This section articulates a theology of ordination, the setting apart of some to provide pastoral leadership to the whole people of God.

Though the New Testament that provides our primary source of guidance for the ordination of spiritual leaders, the earliest relevant example is the formalized manner in which Levitical priests were first set apart, or "ordained." Leviticus 8 and Exodus 29 are parallel texts describing the ordination of Aaron and his sons. Moses is told to "Take the anointing oil and anoint him [Aaron] by pouring it on his head . . . Then tie sashes on Aaron and his sons. The priesthood is theirs by lasting ordinance. Then you shall ordain Aaron and his sons."[68] Ordination involved many events that required days to complete, including several offerings and sacrifices. In Leviticus 8 and Exodus 29 "the most frequent word group remains 'holy,'"[69] indicating that priests were set apart for a purpose. At the end of the ordination of the priests, God clarifies that the whole purpose of consecrating priests to serve in the tabernacle is because "I will dwell in the midst of the Israelites, and I will be their God."[70] This proximity, this nearness of God mediated by his priests, is indeed the point of all salvation history.

Jesus and the Apostles

The gospels record the ministry of Jesus who, while teaching about and demonstrating the kingdom of God in his own life and Passion, directly appointed twelve specific individuals to carry on his work. Those chosen were called apostles, who would provide leadership for God's

68. Exodus 29:7-9.

69. Malone, *God's Mediators*, 27.

70. Exodus 29:45.

people. Jesus twice refers to his followers as the "church" while on many occasions referring to them as his "flock" of "lambs" or "sheep," and his "bride." The gospels, with Jesus at the center, thus provide a sketch of both spiritual leaders and those being led.

The word "apostle" comes from *apostolos*, which means "sent ones" or "messengers," sometimes applied to believers in general, but often applied specifically and somewhat technically to the twelve Jesus appointed: "And he went up on the mountain and called to him those whom he desired, and they came to him. And he appointed twelve (whom he also named apostles) so that they might be with him and he might send them out to preach and have authority to cast out demons."[71]

The twelve apostles were the first New Testament example of certain individuals being set apart for a specific role in the mission and ministry of the new community Jesus formed. Leon Morris summarizes the role of the apostles thus:

> It seems that the apostles are best regarded as the gift of God to the Church in the time of its infancy. They held a unique position and were given unique power and authority for the purpose of establishing new groups of believers and building them up in the faith. Their special powers (e.g. of working miracles) seem to be connected with this. Their principal functions were witnessing to Christ and preaching the gospel. Their exercise of oversight was also clearly very important but the apostles never seem to mention it as the primary thing.[72]

Though the twelve apostles were directly appointed by Jesus, the setting apart of certain individuals for a defined role in the service and leadership of the church continued in the early church.

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71. Mark 3:13-15.

72. Leon Morris, *Ministers of God* (London: InterVarsity Press, 1973), 61. This mountaintop formation of apostolicity is possibly an echo of the mountaintop formation of a priesthood at Mt. Sinai.

The Early Church

In the early church we see both the organic emergence of leadership for local bodies of believers, and the emergence of more technical roles such as the *episcopos* (overseer/bishop), *presbyter* (elder/pastor), and *diakonos* (deacon). The clearest examples in the book of Acts are in chapters 6, 13, and 15. In chapter six "the twelve" ask for "the full number of disciples" to "pick seven men of good repute, full of the Spirit and of wisdom" whom the apostles would ordain as deacons to serve the most vulnerable in the community, namely, the Hellenist widows. The apostles set them apart through a ceremony of prayer, and by laying hands on these candidates.[73]

Similarly, during a time of worship and prayer, a group of believers were led by the Holy Spirit to "set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them;" they then prayed for these two and "laid their hands on them and sent them off."[74] In both Acts 6 and 13 the manner in which these new spiritual officers are set apart is prayer and the laying on of hands, which continues to be the practice today in the ordination service of most traditions.

In Acts 15, the Council of Jerusalem, Paul and Barnabas went to Jerusalem "to the apostles and the elders (*presbuteroi*)" to settle a matter.[75] Several times during this scene we hear of "the apostles and the elders," who were the primary audience and arbiters to hear the dispute and give a decision. These elders/presbyters were set apart for a special office of leadership and responsibility within the church.

Though the technical ecclesiastical role of "bishop" (overseer, *episkopos*) we find in the later church does not have strong or widespread precedent in the early church of the New

73. Acts 6:1-6.

74. Acts 13:1-3.

75. Acts 15:2ff.

Testament documents, the fact that it appears at all as an inchoate office of the church adds to our a theology of ordination. In Paul's first letter to Timothy he writes, "The saying is trustworthy: If anyone aspires to the office of overseer, he desires a noble task."[76] Paul proceeds in the following verses to describe the godly traits required of anyone desiring this office. Paul also calls out, in the opening words of his letter to the Philippians, "the overseers and deacons."[77] Though not comprehensively defined, the setting apart of some for particular roles within the community was clearly practiced from the beginning of the ministries of Jesus and the church.

Anglican Holy Orders

The Anglican Tradition observes three distinct ordained offices of leadership in the church: bishop, priest/presbyter, and deacon. Though some traditions claim that their structures of leadership follow the one clearly prescribed New Testament model of church governance, most acknowledge the ambiguity of Scripture on this point. Leon Morris argues that the hundreds of sects and denominations throughout church history basically reduce to three categories: episcopalianism, presbyterianism, and congregationalism, in descending order of how hierarchical is their leadership structure.[78]

Episcopalianism, the system of governance in Anglicanism, holds that only the bishop is allowed to ordain priests and deacons. This view comes primarily from the belief in "apostolic succession," a phrase that has been variously understood. Leon Morris summarizes the different understandings as (1) open and public succession to office—a particular office held in a

76. 1 Timothy 3:1.

77. Philippians 1:1.

78. Morris, *Ministers of God*, 91.

particular geographic see handed down from one bishop to his successor; (2) successors in function—the handing down from the apostles to the bishops of all ages such duties as leadership, guarding the faith and unity of the church, etc.; (3) succession in doctrine—the apostolic charge to guard the witness of the apostles, the teaching of the church, held in trust and handed down from one generation to another; (4) succession by ordination—the ordination of a bishops by other bishops from the original apostles down to current times.[79] Related to the question of apostolic succession, with similarly varied perspectives within Anglicanism, are views on the ontology of the priest, upon ordination, and the question of whether their priesthood is indelible.[80]

Discernment of a Call to Holy Orders

Who is called to Holy Orders? This question is answered through a mutually confirmed process of discernment involving both an internal and external process by the candidate.[81] The

79. Morris, *Ministers of God*, 91-92.

80. These questions are beyond the scope of this project and not clearly answered within a biblical theology of priesthood. However, the following resources provide both a general overview of views on Anglican Holy Orders, and some discussion of the particular questions surrounding apostolic succession and indelibility. *The Holy Orders Task Force Final Report.* College of Bishops of the Anglican Church of North America. Accessed August 23, 2021. https://anglicanchurch.net/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/HolyOrdersTaskForce-printable.pdf. John V. Butler and W. Norman Pittenger, *What Is the Priesthood? A Book on Vocation* (New York: Morehouse-Gorham, 1954); Paul Gibson, *Anglican Ordination Rites: the Berkeley Statement, To Equip the Saints: Findings of the Sixth International Anglican Liturgical Consultation*, *Berkeley, California, 2001* (Cambridge: Grove Books, 2002); Leon Morris, *Ministers of God* (London: Inter-Varsity Press, 1973); Stephen Neill, ed., *The Ministry of the Church* (London: Canterbury Press, 1947); Michael Ramsey, *The Gospel and the Catholic Church* (London: Longmans, 1961); Michael Ramsey, *The Christian Priest Today* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2012); George R. Sumner, *Being Salt: A Theology of an Ordered Church* (Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2007); Robert E. Terwilliger and Urban T. Holmes, *To Be a Priest: Perspectives on Vocation and Ordination* (New York: Seabury Press, 1975).

81. The optimal discernment process would include listening to God in personal prayer, in the voices of one's friends, family, and spiritual leaders, in an intentionally formed discernment committee, and in conversation with a Spiritual Director. There are many good books on vocation and discernment that would provide additional orientation and understanding such as: Charles D. Drew, *A Journey Worth Taking: Finding Your Purpose in This World* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P & R, 2007); Suzanne G. Farnham, *Listening Hearts: Discerning Call in Community* (New York: Morehouse, 2011); Steven Garber, *The Fabric of Faithfulness: Weaving Together Belief and Behavior* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Books, 2007); Stephen J. Nichols, *What Is Vocation?* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P & R, 2010);

candidate should have an internal sense of call, an inner motivation to spend one's life serving and building up the body of Christ, mobilizing her to mission, studying and proclaiming God's Word, and leading her as a worshiping community gathered around the Scriptures and Sacraments. The internal motivation to give one's life to this work is not merely an occupational preference. It is rather, having counted the cost, the answer to a summons with both joyful anticipation and sober-mindedness.

Because the call is to serve and lead the community of God's people, the discernment of a call also requires an external process, the affirmation of the community.[82] The community is involved in discerning who among themselves is called to lead the community, and serves as a check or screen for the lack of sufficient character or gifting in individuals who might self-elect for ordination. This external process involves prayerful evaluations of the individual's health and holiness, the health of their family and relationships, their devotional faithfulness, and their ministry fruitfulness. Candidates ought to be fruitfully engaged in ministry before entering the discernment process. A genuine and demonstrated love for God, his Word, his people, and his world are non-negotiable. Ordination is a formal affirmation of what is already happening informally, namely, a lifestyle of fruitful ministry.[83]

Parker J. Palmer, *Let Your Life Speak: Listening for the Voice of Vocation* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2000); William C. Placher, *Callings: Twenty Centuries of Christian Wisdom on Vocation* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 2005); Mark R. Schwehn and Dorothy C. Bass, *Leading Lives That Matter: What We Should Do and Who We Should Be* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 2020); Gordon T. Smith, *Courage & Calling: Embracing Your God-given Potential* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2011).

82. It should be noted that this combination of internal and external processes of discernment is how *all* Christians (the royal priesthood) ought to discern vocation.

83. Because Anglicanism has a robust history of being one of the most theologically and liturgically oriented Protestant denominations, it attracts people who have a keen interest in such topics (theology and liturgy). Some come to the faulty conclusion that if they love theology and/or liturgy they should become a priest. The more important question is, "do they effectively make disciples, build community, lead in worship and mission, practice the cure of souls, communicate scripture, etc.?"

The process of external discernment serves the best interests of both the candidate—who is saved from a vocational life that will likely be frustrating, unfruitful, and possibly even personally painful— and the community of God's people. Thomas Oden reminds the reader, in *Pastoral Theology*,

> The purpose of all this is to safeguard the Christian community from inept leadership, misinformed teachers, or bad pastors whose mis-judgments or malpractice could harm the flock. If the examination is entered into with an open mind, the approved ordinand should come out of the process with a clear sense that his or her calling has been fully endorsed by the community.[84]

Qualifications for Holy Orders

With both an internal and external affirmation of call, the candidate will also need to meet theological and ministry training qualifications. Though the call to ministry requires more than rigorous theological education—the work of fruitful ministry being the essence—there is danger in ordaining theologically unformed, or poorly formed, candidates. Spiritual leaders are required to guard the apostolic witness, remaining faithful to the orthodox convictions of the church throughout all ages, while also adroitly contextualizing in the particular places, cultures, and times in which we live. To "rightly divide the Word of God" and lead the church in sound doctrine, while being missional and contextually sensitive—this takes in-depth studies in Bible, church history, and theology. [85] Many of the challenges we face, the church has faced before. Theological education brings the candidate for ordination into conversation with the scriptures

84. Thomas C. Oden, *Pastoral Theology: Essentials of Ministry* (San Francisco: Harper Collins Publishers, 1983), 22.

85. 2 Timothy 2:15. Kevin Vanhoozer and Owen Strachan articulate the call to be pastoral practitioners who also think and lead theologically in *The Pastor as Public Theologian: Reclaiming a Lost Vision* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2015).

and tradition, so that they might nourish the body of Christ with the ancient faith in contemporary settings.

The Manner of Ordination

The common denominator among the commissioning and ordinations we see in the New Testament are laying hands upon and interceding for the candidates. The earliest full account we have of an ordination comes from Hippolytus, in his *Apostolic Tradition*. Will Willimon observes five traits of ordination services that, at least since Hippolytus (early 3rd Century), have informed all subsequent rites of ordination in the Western church:

> (1) the entire community and its presbyters choose the bishop; (2) the candidate must respond in free will; (3) the local congregation tests the candidate's faith to be sure that it is apostolic; (4) episcopal laying on of hands with a prayer for the Holy Spirit (*epiclesis*) shows that, though the community chooses, this is not solely a congregational choice; (5) the new ministry is interpreted as a gift of the Holy Spirit because of the choice of the community.[86]

It is clear, from the earliest recorded examples of the church's practice, that the ordination of new clergy is a community choice and event; it reflects a baptismal ecclesiology. The community as a whole recognizes the gifting of the candidate, intercedes for them, is represented by the bishop's laying on of hands (the bishop as focus of the church's unity), and sends out the newly ordained on mission and ministry empowered by the Holy Spirit.

Conclusion

We all share in Christ's priesthood by baptism. Each Christian's baptism was their "ordination" service to commission them as part of the royal priesthood, whereby they do the

86. William H. Willimon, *Pastor: The Theology and Practice of Ordained Ministry* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2016), 32-33.

work of mission and ministry in their daily life and work. The homes and workplaces, parks and grocery stores, with followers of Jesus bearing witness in those spaces—these are the front lines of holiness and the kingdom of God advancing in the world. However, God has set some apart to lead his people into their royal priesthood. These ministers are priests to the people of God who are priests to the world.

About the role of the ordained priest in the church, Will Willimon writes,

> In that fateful intersection between God's people and God, in that risky transaction between Christ and his body, the church, stands the priest. It is no small thing to be used by God in mediation between God and humanity, to offer the gifts of God's people, to intercede for the world's suffering in prayer, rightly to divide the word of God. With trembling and with joy, the pastor works that fateful space between here and the throne of God.[87]

Ordained priests are mediators who lead God's people into his presence, and into maturity in their own priesthood.

87. Willimon, *Pastor*, 11.

CHAPTER THREE

LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature review is in effect disbursed over Chapters Two and Three, with Chapter Two being weighted more toward biblical theology and the relevant literary sources and Chapter Three weighted toward practical theology and the relevant literary sources. In other words, the review of literature occurs more implicitly than a piece-by-piece explication of each source.

PriestCraft attempts to shape ministers-in-formation to become Anglican priests, ordained ministers who teach and embody the full scope of biblical priesthood. Because PriestCraft is a process of formation, the first section of this chapter therefore reflects on the theology and literature of Christian spiritual formation. The rest of the chapter will then provide an overview of PriestCraft's core curricular content, the priestly quadrilateral: (1) Making Oblation; (2) God's Holiness and Ours; (3) God's Word and Ours; and (4) Bearing Witness.

Spiritual Formation: The Call to Christian Maturity

God desires for his people to be mature in Christ.[1] Ultimately, the standard of maturity is Christ himself, a kind of wholeness and holiness we can never achieve through our own efforts to imitate him, but only by mystical union with Christ and the power of the Holy Spirit.[2] Paul tells

1. It is implicit throughout Scripture that God's people are continually in formation, frequently made explicit, as in the following samples: "Him we proclaim, warning everyone and teaching everyone with all wisdom, that we may present everyone *mature in Christ*" (Colossians 1:28). "Brothers, do not be children in your thinking. Be infants in evil, but in your thinking be mature" (1 Corinthians 14:20). Paul explains that the purpose of leadership gifting is for the "building up of the body of Christ, until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ" (Ephesians 4:13). And James, using different language to the same effect, writes "let steadfastness have its full effect, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing" (James 1:4).

2. The past three decades have seen a proliferation of works addressing Christian maturity, a field that is now called "spiritual formation," which has become the most common phrase for the process of growing in the

the Galatians, "I am again in the anguish of childbirth until Christ is formed in you!"[3] Our formation in Christ is central to the purposes of the church.[4] Parrett and Kang, as they contend for Christian education and formation in the church, choose the Pauline language of maturity to talk about the lifelong process of growth:

> [In Ephesians 4-6] Paul's vision of the mature, fully functioning body of Christ is sketched in some detail…. Here is a vision of what a well-instructed, well-formed community may come to look like, by God's grace. The mature body is stable, truthful, loving, laboring, and united (see Eph 4:14-16). It grows 'up into him who is the Head, that is, Christ.' Perhaps we can envision here a newborn baby whose body, after years of loving care and proper nourishment, 'grows up' in proportion to *its* head.[5]

God gave the gift of the Law after delivering the Israelites from Egypt, so that they might live as a "mature body," one that would be "stable, truthful, loving, laboring, and united," but it proved impossible to keep faithfully. Jesus therefore fulfilled the Law for Israel (and all nations)

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likeness of Christ. The following selections provide a good sample of works addressing this need: M. Robert Mulholland, *Invitation to a Journey: A Road Map for Spiritual Formation* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2016); Gary A. Parrett and Steve Kang. *Teaching the Faith, Forming the Faithful: A Biblical Vision for Education in the Church* (Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity, 2009); Jim Wilhoit, *Spiritual Formation as If the Church Mattered: Growing in Christ through Community* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2008); Dallas Willard, *The Great Omission: Reclaiming Jesus's Essential Teachings on Discipleship* (New York: HarperOne, 2014); N. T. Wright, *After You Believe: Why Christian Character Matters* (New York: HarperCollins, 2012).

3. Galatians 4:19.

4. Various emphases vie for preeminence as *the* purpose of the church, the usual contenders being formation, worship, and mission. Wilhoit, for example, in *Spiritual Formation as If the Church Mattered*, argues for spiritual formation: "Spiritual formation is *the* task of the church. Period. It represents neither an interesting, optional pursuit by the church nor an insignificant category in the job description of the body of Christ. Spiritual formation is at the heart of its whole purpose for existence. The church was formed to form. Our charge, given by Jesus himself, is to make disciples, baptize them, and teach these new disciples to obey his commands (Matt. 28:19-20)" (p. 15). While the distinctions are helpful for conceptualizing different aspects of the church, they should not be separated from each other. Ultimately the church exists for worship, for the glory of God, but he is glorified by our Christlike transformation, our worship, and our mission. Furthermore, these three co-inhere; worship that is beautiful and good and true can bear missional fruit by drawing in nonbelievers. Our costly engagement in mission has a formational effect on our character and soul, which in turn becomes part of our worship, an offering of ourselves as a living sacrifice.

5. Parrett and Kang, *Teaching the Faith, Forming the Faithful*, 41. Parrett and Kang make the helpful observation that education and formation do not begin with a blank slate, with an *un*formed person, but with persons who are *de*formed or *mal*formed. While the authors refer to *mal*formation according to a normative biblical standard, the language is helpful also for our purposes with PriestCraft. As priests come into the ACNA from outside the sacramental-liturgical traditions, they come not simply lacking formation in the biblical understanding of priesthood, but often "malformed" in what it means to be a priest within their new historical, theological, and ecclesial context.

and gave the gift of his Spirit to be his empowering presence in everyone who repents and believes, enabling us to be united to Christ and to walk in his ways. The Law is not abolished but fulfilled and written on our hearts, so that God's people might live by the Spirit with the bountiful presence and gifts of God, for the sake of others and his glory.

What does it mean to be formed in Christ, with his inscription on our hearts and in our lives? The answer is in Jesus' summary of the Law, "'And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.' The second is this: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no other commandment greater than these."[6] This is the most concise Christian understanding of Christian maturity.[7]

We can identify three traits of Christian maturity in these two greatest commandments that apply directly to a theology of non-formal theological education like PriestCraft. First, maturity in the Bible involves the whole person. "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and soul," speaks to the desires and affections. The priority and intensity of our loves, whether rightly ordered or disordered, is one of the key indicators of maturity. But our affections and desires are not the only parts of the self that make us human, and which must come under the rule and reign of Christ. Our mind and strength must also be re-oriented around the revelation of God and His truth. Christian maturity involves our intellectual faculties, our reason and understanding of God and His world and ways. We are also given the good gift of bodies—physical bodies that exist in space and time and are a temple of the Lord—through which we act. Christian maturity is holistic, seeking the holy integration of every aspect of our person in Christ,

6. Mark 12:30-31.

7. Wilhoit calls these "The Two Great Invitations of Jesus," employing the language of invitation rather than command. He catalogues many of Jesus' invitations in the gospels as "flowing out of the call to love God and neighbor." (*Spiritual Formation as if the Church Mattered*, 46-49.)

by the power of the Spirit, oriented in love toward the Father. This is the vertical axis of our maturity.

There is also a horizontal axis of our maturity. Biblical maturity, secondly, involves the whole person *in relationship*. Jesus commands us to love God *and neighbor* with heart, soul, mind, and strength. Just as we are called to love God with our whole selves, re-integrated in Christ, we are also called to whole relationships.

The third trait of Christian maturity we find in the Great Commandment is that God calls us to do things wholeheartedly.[8] The word "all" is repeated each time our love is commanded: "You shall love the Lord your God with *all* your heart and with *all* your soul and with *all* your mind and with *all* your strength." Dallas Willard writes,

> Spirituality and spiritual formation are *whole life matters* [emphasis mine]. A "spiritual life" for the human being consists in that range of activities in which, being brought to spiritual birth by God's initiative through the Word, he or she cooperatively interacts with God and with the spiritual order ("kingdom") deriving from God's personality and action.[9]

Wholehearted, whole-life discipleship is a call to give our entire multifaceted selves, holding nothing back, an absolute self-surrender to both our general vocation as children of God, and our particular vocations that give individual expression to what God has called us to be and do in our particular place and time.[10] One of the collects of the Book of Common Prayer voices succinct supplication, that our whole hearts may be truly aligned with love of God and neighbor:

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8. I am using the term "wholehearted" as a common expression in English for total commitment and devotion of one's entire self (not just one's "heart"), encompassing all that is delineated in the biblical terms "heart, soul, mind, and strength."

9. Willard, *The Great Omission*, 49.

10. In *Visions of Vocation*, Steven Garber writes, "The word vocation is a rich one, having to address the wholeness of life, the range of relationships and responsibilities. Work, yes, but also families, and neighbors, and citizenship, locally and globally—all of this and more is seen as vocation, that to which I am called as a human being, living my life before the face of God. It is never the same word as *occupation* just as *calling* is never the same word as career. Sometimes, by grace, the words and the realities they represent do overlap, even significantly; sometimes, in the incompleteness of life in a fallen world, there is not much overlap at all" (11).

O God, you have taught us to keep all your commandments by loving you and our neighbor: Grant us the grace of your Holy Spirit, that we may be devoted to you with our whole heart, and united to one another with pure affection; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.[11]

The Call to Glorify God

This kind of life-in-formation is not only for our own good, and the common good, but also an act of worship, the ultimate purpose for which we were created and redeemed. Those who are in Christ and learning to walk in his ways glorify God. In Christ "we have obtained an inheritance…so that we who were the first to hope in Christ might be to the praise of his glory."[12] Paul likewise charges the Corinthian church to do everything for the glory of God, no matter what it is, even eating and drinking.[13] God's glory is "true north"; every human heart and action is to be oriented around "the praise of his glory."

God-Glorifying Maturity Requires Effort and Seeks Fruitfulness

The ordained ACNA priest is called to intentional preparation and formation as disciples who wholeheartedly love God and others, with every aspect of who they are, for the praise of God's glory, no less than any other follower of Jesus. This is our common vocation as children of God, one in which we all need formation and growth, one which also requires effort and

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11. *The Book of Common Prayer* (New York: Seabury Press, 1979), 230.

12. Ephesians 1:11-12.

13. 1 Corinthians 10:31.

intentionality.[14] "What we must understand," writes Willard, "is that spiritual formation is a process that involves the transformation of the whole person, and that the whole person must be *active with Christ* in the work of spiritual formation. Spiritual transformation into Christ-likeness is not going to happen to us unless we act."[15] Ordained priests, like all followers of Jesus, are called to be lifelong learners, active with Christ spiritual and vocational formation.

Intentional and effortful formation for skilled ordained priesthood is part of the priest's effort to do everything for the glory of God. To enter ordained priestly ministry (or any other particular vocation, for that matter), without concern for competence or growth would fail to be either wholehearted or to live for the praise of God's glory. Preparatory formation and continual growth are essential to vocational faithfulness.

Another theological rationale for PriestCraft is the biblical emphasis on fruitfulness. Priests are called to demonstrate Christian character, to be sure, and to be faithful, but also to demonstrate competence. Both steadfastness and skill are necessary.[16] It is not enough, on the one hand, to simply be "successful" by quantifiable congregational measures. Quantifiable success can be identified by numeric growth within the budget, staff, congregation, and community without actually achieving organizational objectives (i.e. in a church setting, transformed lives).

Nor is it enough, on the other hand, to simply be "faithful" in the tasks of Christian leadership. Faithfulness to the calling is necessary, to be sure, but only part of the call of priestly

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14. N. T. Wright articulates well how formation requires effort in his book *After You Believe: Why Christian Character Matters* (New York: HarperCollins, 2012). He is careful not to confuse effort toward growth in maturity with earning one's salvation, 35.

15. Willard, *The Great Omission*, 57.

16. King David is described with this combination in Psalm 78:72, "With upright heart he shepherded them and guided them with his skillful hand."

service One may faithfully fulfill tasks with diligence and character, but without creating organizational movement or achieving ministry objectives. Not every virtuous candidate for priesthood is equally likely to be fruitful in their ministry. Effective priestly ministry can be described biblically, not so much as quantifiable success, nor simply as faithfulness, but as fruitfulness according to the organization's or role's *raison d'etre*.[17] The agrarian biblical metaphor of fruitfulness has the advantage of suggesting an organic process that leads to an identifiable *telos*.[18] Every ordained priest desires to be fruitful, which cannot be assumed to occur through character alone, native abilities alone, nor even the sound theological training they receive in formal education.

In broad strokes this is the ends of PriestCraft: to contribute to the formation of ordained priests who minister with Christian maturity, wholeheartedness, and fruitfulness, within a ministry context of the ACNA, for the glory of God. This is the biblical definition of the vocational good we seek to do in the church and the world which, like any other good we seek, requires a process of growth and learning.

17. This distinction is articulated well in Bob Burns and Tasha Chapman, *Resilient Ministry: What Pastors Told Us About Surviving and Thriving* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2013).

18. "Fruitful" is used through the Old Testament to describe the reproduction and multiplication of God's people. In the New Testament this resonance carries through, but has a less concrete definition, also including personal and corporate holiness. Concerning fruitfulness as applied to ministry behaviors, Titus 3:14 encourages Christians to "let our people learn to devote themselves to good works, so as to help cases of urgent need, and not be unfruitful." See also Matthew 12:33, 13:23; Revelation 22:2.

The Four Priestly Roles

With the theological foundations for priesthood, ordination, and formation established, we can now discuss the four arenas of priestly service— the priestly quadrilateral and their underpinnings. The following four priestly roles form the curricular outline of PriestCraft: (1) Making Oblation; (2) God's Holiness and Ours; (3) God's Word and Ours; and (4) Bearing Witness.[19]

It is important to keep before us the fact that these four priestly roles describe the call of the royal priesthood, the whole people of God. They also apply, therefore, to the ordained priesthood (who are a subset of the royal priesthood). The ministry of ordained Anglican priests will be strengthened by integrating this priestly quadrilateral into their work in three crucial ways.

First, inasmuch as the ordained priesthood is a call to lead God's people into their priesthood, clergy must have an understanding of what it means for *everyone* to be a priest. Clergy are to equip the saints to live their priesthood, that is, to make oblation, pursue holiness, listen and respond to God's Word, and bear witness to the living God.

The second way in which these four priestly roles shape the life and ministry of the ordained priest is through modeling. The ordained priest lives a *personal* life of making oblation,

19. Few works have been published on a comprehensive biblical theology of the priesthood and its implications for the church today, and those that do address the royal priesthood today, do so primarily to redress the unfortunate implications of clericalism. None of those that have been published frame the roles of priesthood in these four categories, and for the most part exclude "Making Oblation." Paul Stevens comes close to offering a vision of priesthood as making oblation, but his work is not primarily a biblical theology of the priesthood, per se. Some works substantially addressing a biblical theology of priesthood, but with varying degrees of attention to the royal priesthood, include: André Feuillet and Matthew J. O'Connell, *The Priesthood of Christ and His Ministers* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1975); Gerald O'Collins and Michael Keenan Jones, *Jesus Our Priest: a Christian Approach to the Priesthood of Christ* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012); Uche Anizor and Hank Voss, *Representing Christ: a Vision for the Priesthood of All Believers* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2016).

holiness, immersion in Scripture and prayer, and bearing witness to the world. Gregory the Great issues a daunting call to exemplary living:

> He [the priest] must, therefore, be the model for everyone. He must be devoted entirely to the example of good living. He must be dead to the passions of the flesh and live a spiritual life. He must have no regard for worldly prosperity and never cower in the face of adversity…. He must set such a positive example for others that he has nothing for which he should ever be ashamed.[20]

Lastly, these four categories inform the call of clergy by shaping the vision, values, and structures of their ministry context. Ordained priests, for example, make oblation of the congregation. They lead the congregation with values and programs that call people to personal holiness and a vision of the holiness God. They prize the Word of God in their preaching and teaching and organize church life in prayerful rhythms. They form the congregation with a missional self-understanding, seeking ways that the congregation would be a "city on a hill" in their town or city, pointing people to Jesus and his kingdom.

Making Oblation

Making Oblation as a Royal Priesthood

"Oblation" is part of a cluster of English words like "offering" and "sacrifice" that translate one of the many Hebrew or Greek words used in the Bible to describe priestly activity in the dwelling places of God. These three simple English words have semantic overlap. Behind them lie seventeen Hebrew words and four Greek words, each describing a different nuance of the offering being made. They convey the related but distinct notions of offering such as: the movement of lifting or raising up; making a contribution; the giving of a gift or present; drawing or coming near in order to present an offering; to offer willingly, a freewill offering; bringing

20. Gregory, *The Book of Pastoral Rule* (Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 2007), 43-44.

gifts in worship, such as the Magi at Jesus' birth; sacrifice from herd or crop; offerings made with thanksgiving or confession or praise.[21] Like the proverbial fifty words for snow in the language of the Inuit peoples, the sheer number and nuances of biblical words for offer/offering show the communal centrality of that to which the words refer: the priestly act in mediating the relationship between creator and creation.

The Oxford English Dictionary (OED) defines oblation first as a technical term, used specifically in a religious or ecclesiastical sense. It is "the action of solemnly offering or presenting something to God or to a deity; the offering of a sacrifice, of a thanksgiving, or of religious devotion," with a secondary, more specific, meaning in reference to Holy Eucharist: "The action of offering or presenting the elements of bread and wine to God in the Eucharist; also, the whole office of the Eucharist."[22] The OED also indicates occasional use, in a general non-ecclesiastical sense, of oblation as "the action of offering or presenting: as of a gift, especially in token of respect or honor."

Priests make oblation. They offer something to God. This is not a commonly used term; we are more accustomed to its synonyms "offering" or "sacrifice," neither of which capture the full breadth and contemporary resonance of what it means to make oblation, though "offering" comes closest.

To present grain or animals as an offering or sacrifice conveys a costly gift or sacrificial loss appropriate, respectively, to the creaturely dependence or sinful state of humanity. These sacrifices throughout scripture are often called an "offering," which can include the notion of a costly loss, but also connotes the possibility of joyfully presenting a gift. While "offering" may at

21. Stephen D. Renn, *Expository Dictionary of Bible Words: Word Studies for Key English Bible Words* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 2005), 685ff.

22. *Oxford English Dictionary*, s.v. "Oblation" (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1933).

times refer to a literal sacrifice of animal or grain, it also gives expression to the heartfelt generosity of one's belongings or even one's very self.

To make oblation today includes the range of meanings in both of these terms, "sacrifice" and "offering," but puts less emphasis on the sacrificial or even atoning purposes of our offerings, now that the once-for-all sacrifice and self-offering has been made by Jesus the Great High Priest. Oblation retains, however, the priestly act of offering all things up to God, voicing creation's praises and laments.

Everything created exists for a divine purpose. That is not to say that everything is utilitarian; its purpose might be simply to express God's creativity and playfulness, and thereby glorify him in the silence of a distant galaxy or the depths of the ocean. The beauty of God is reflected in the glories of creation. Created things also exist for the purposes of each other, as we see in the interconnectedness of things, such as solar systems and ecological systems. Flora and fauna also exist, according to Genesis, under human dominion, with flora expressly stated as serving a nutritional purpose for everything that has breath. Human dominion and the cultural mandate, it must be remembered however, are to operate in a way that allows every created thing to serve its primary purposes of glorifying God and serving other created things sustainably in the interdependent systems God has created.

Everything has a purpose built into it, a *telos*. The *telos* of a tree, for example, is to glorify God (1) through its "treeness," that is, in its unique being or its inherent created qualities and beauties; (2) through its contribution to other created things in the ecological system in which it participates; and (3) through its service of humanity (who uses but not abuses the tree, harvesting and replanting responsibly and thoughtfully, not wastefully or thoughtlessly) such as

becoming a chair or the frame of a dwelling or fuel to cook a meal. Humans enact their priesthood by participating attentively in any of these three modes of the tree fulfilling its *telos*.

In accordance with the first mode, we are making oblation of the tree when we "lift it up" and behold it for its inherent qualities, giving it appreciative attention, noticing its particulars, wondering at its mysteries, studying it scientifically, rendering it artistically, or climbing it playfully. We likewise make oblation of the tree when we protect its ability to take its flourishing place within the ecological system, serving and being served by the rest of creation. Lastly, we make oblation of the tree when we use it responsibly to make something needful or beautiful, bringing out its unique or praiseworthy qualities, or eating its fruit. When we do any or all these things, with a tree or any person, place, thing, or time—when we thus offer them up to the praise of God's glory, we are priests making oblation. The *telos* of everything created is to be an oblate.

Oblation in our time pleases the recipient (God, expressing honor and worth to him), dignifies the giver in the process, and sees the beauty and inherent value in the gift itself. This understanding of oblation is central to what it means to be human, central to the purpose of humanity. The term "oblation" allows for an expansive biblical understanding of life in the service and company of God. We make oblation when we join God's delight in creation and assist in the realization of its *telos*. To make oblation is to offer grateful attention to the glories of God in any and every person, place, thing, or time, as they proleptically are now and ever shall be in the *eschaton*.[23]

This is priestly work and is a form of worship. It begins with Adam and Eve, making oblation as priests in the garden-temple, an indication that to make oblation is part of what it means to be human, continuing through the biblical story to the royal priesthood and the new

23. Because the noun "oblation" does not have a verb form, we will use verb forms of "offer," at times, in reference to making oblation.

heavens and earth. Paul spoke of himself as being in priestly service of the gospel, making an "offering" of the Gentiles, the same Greek word used elsewhere in reference to sacrifices at the altar.[24] Paul clearly does not mean the sacrifice or destruction of the Gentiles. In fact, he means something quite the contrary, that through his gospel ministry to them he is elevating them to their true *telos* as human beings. Paul is honoring the intrinsic value and purpose of all *ethne*, offering them up in gratitude and wonderment. While most translations render this passage as Paul making an "offering" of the Gentiles, the Douay-Rheims Bible translates it as the "oblation" of the Gentiles. This is an act of service and worship for Paul, an oblation of people to their true designed purpose.[25]

How Do We Make Oblation Today?

Though we no longer live within the cultic system of Israel and her priests, with literal altars and sacrifices, we are nevertheless priests ourselves who still make oblation. Just as an ordained priest during the Great Thanksgiving (Holy Eucharist) lifts up the bread and wine as something good and beautiful and true, representing not only Jesus himself but also grapes, wheat and the whole creation in which he was incarnate—just as the ordained priest thus makes oblation of these created things at the table, so does the royal priesthood in their quotidian life.

When the royal priesthood adores the goodness, beauty, and truth of creation they are lifting it up as an oblation. When the royal priesthood has eyes to see a person for who they truly are, their intrinsic worth, and who they were created to be, they are making oblation of that

24. Acts 21:26; Ephesians 5:2; Hebrews 10:8, 14, 18.

25. The late Robert Farrar Capon, Episcopal priest, professor, and writer, has written a delightful and profound book on oblation entitled, *An Offering of Uncles*, which whimsically but persuasively shows how oblation is central to being human. Any effort to better understand the role of oblation will be richly rewarded by this under-appreciated work. Robert Farrar Capon, *An Offering of Uncles; the Priesthood of Adam and the Shape of the World* (New York: Crossroad, 1982).

person. When a software developer writes code that is elegant, simple, and powerful they are making oblation of language, just as a poet who bends language to surprise and reveal. When a farmer cultivates crops mindful of the particularities of their land and their neighbors, they are making oblation of place, no less than the suburban homeowner who weeds and plants in their yard, and joins the Neighborhood Association in the community they treasure. When we mark time with birthdays and afternoon naps, Sabbath-keeping and the church calendar, we are making oblation of time.

In every single moment of our lives we inhabit creation; we occupy a particular matrix of people, place, time, and things. Oblation is the act of "thou-ing," of treasuring, of "delighting in," or "lamenting for," noticing and honoring the inherent value and worth of that which we behold. In the priestly offerings in the cultic system, what made the offering a *sacrifice*, was the fact that it had value, perhaps even without blemish. God rejected the so-called sacrifices that had no value, in which his people had made no investment of themselves, or which would cost them nothing. To offer up in oblation is to say to God, "this (person, place, thing, or time) came from you, has inherent worth and beauty which I have beheld and honored, and now lift back to you. Great are the works of your hands."[26] Facing God we give voice to creation's praise and laments. As George Herbert puts it poetically, "Man is the World's high Priest; he doth present the sacrifice for all."[27]

Making Oblation of People

26. Even our language of attention speaks of the personal investment required to make oblation of creation. We describe the act as *paying* attention.

27 I am grateful to the Rev. Dr. Nathan Baxter for introducing me to these lines in Herbert's poem, "Providence."

Adam and Eve were the first priests making oblation of each other, bone of each other's bone and flesh of each other's flesh, male and female, honoring each other with complementarity, walking together in the garden-temple naked and unafraid. The intended purpose of everything the Levitical priests did was to serve God and the people; they existed as a vocational guild for the sake of others, to facilitate the worship of God and the flourishing of the people. Jesus was the perfect example of making oblation of people; he laid down his life for his friends and, indeed, the whole world. Jesus' greatest commandment was to love God and our neighbor, whether in the most intimate context of marriage or with the most "other" people we can imagine. To truly see another human being, to make their concerns our own, to encourage, comfort, correct, listen to, affirm, serve, to be with and for another human being—this is our greatest act of oblation. When ordained priests give this kind of pastoral care and formational attention to their congregation, they are making oblation of God's people.

Making Oblation of Place

Throughout the Scriptures creation is not merely a backdrop, stage and set on which plays the drama between God and his people. The motifs of land and water, the heavens and the earth, carry great theological significance, with all creation—flora and fauna too—involved in the drama of redemption. Adam and Eve were charged with the care and cultivation of the garden; the priests were to teach Israel the laws pertaining to the restorative rhythms of the land, with both productive years and fallow years. We are called to creation care, that is, to preserve, responsibly cultivate, and allow to thrive the natural environment.[28] This oblation of creation

28. For further reading, see: Steven Bouma-Prediger, *For the Beauty of the Earth: A Christian Vision for Creation Care* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2010); Annie Dillard, *Pilgrim at Tinker Creek* (New York: Harper Perennial Modern Classics, 2013); Belden C. Lane, *The Solace of Fierce Landscapes: Exploring Desert and*

extends to the built environment as well. Israel, for example, is told during their Babylonian exile to seek the flourishing of their new city in Jeremiah 29. The New Heavens and the New Earth envision all the redeemed, with resurrected bodies, expressing the shalom of God in a city.

From Adam and Eve's call to place-making in the garden to all God's people in the New Jerusalem, we are called to invest with care and love in the particular land and places where we live, a commitment to the flourishing of both the wild places of creation, and the particular locale we inhabit.[29] God chose to restore all things by starting with one wandering nomad, Abraham, and entering his creation through one embodied man, fully human, raised in the little known village of Nazareth, so that the whole cosmos would be renewed.

Making Oblation of Things

While there is some overlap between an oblation of place and things, the latter puts more emphasis on the human vocation to work with the physical world, to create complex things out of simple things, to build systems and institutions, language and art. The biblical foundation for

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Mountain Spirituality (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014); Francis A. Schaeffer and Udo W. Middelmann, *Pollution and the Death of Man* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2011).

29. A growing number of works have addressed this idea of place-making in recent years, some explicitly, others by implication. These books would serve as good guides for further exploration: Craig G. Bartholomew, *Where Mortals Dwell: A Christian View of Place for Today* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2011); Andrew Rumsey, *Parish: An Anglican Theology of Place* (London: SCM Press, 2017); Wendell Berry, *Jayber Crow: The Life Story of Jayber Crow, Barber of the Port William Membership as Written by Himself: A Novel* (Berkeley, CA: Counterpoint, 2001); David E. Fitch, *Faithful Presence: Seven Disciplines That Shape the Church for Mission* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2016); David P. Leong, *Race & Place: How Urban Geography Shapes the Journey to Reconciliation* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Books, 2017); Paul Sparks, Tim Sorens, and Dwight J. Friesen, *The New Parish: How Neighborhood Churches Are Transforming Mission, Discipleship and Community* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2014); Jay Pathak and Dave Runyon, *The Art of Neighboring: Building Genuine Relationships Right outside Your Door* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2012); Raymond Bakke, *A Theology as Big as the City* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 1997); Timothy Keller, *Center Church: Doing Balanced, Gospel-centered Ministry in Your City* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2012); Robert W. Campbell, *You Are There: Restoring Churches, People, and Places* (Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2016); Eric O. Jacobsen, *Sidewalks in the Kingdom: New Urbanism and the Christian Faith* (Grand Rapids, MI: Brazos Press, 2003); Kathleen Norris, *Dakota: A Spiritual Geography* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2001); Melody Warnick, *This Is Where You Belong: The Art and Science of Loving the Place You Live* (New York: Penguin Books, 2017); Stephen E. Witmer, *A Big Gospel in Small Places: Why Ministry in Forgotten Communities Matters* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2019).

this vocation is, again, Adam and Eve in the garden-temple and their call to "work it and keep it." As noted above, "work it and keep it" is tabernacle/temple language, describing the work of Levitical priests as well. This charge to cultivate creation is a charge to make culture. C*ulture*, in fact, is a product of humans *cultivating* elements of creation. Anything humans have made is a cultural artifact, whether stone mortar and pestle, origami goose, spaghetti dinner, Dubai skyscraper, the Dallas Cowboys, software code, or a constitutional government. The people who make any part or the whole of these things are priests of creation, making oblation of things, offering back up to God what came from him in the beginning.[30]

Adam and Eve are also given dominion over flora and fauna. God "brought them [fauna] to the man to see what he would call them," inviting the first human to participate with him in identifying, or naming, the glory of a thing. Language has tremendous power which God shares with his human creatures. By word God spoke creation into being. John opens his gospel with a reprisal of this creation scene, declaring "in the beginning was the Word."

Adam's invitation to name the creatures was an invitation to agency, and god-like power to bless. Naming is a way of making oblation not only of people, but also all creatures. Names are personal and particular, weighty with meaning throughout the Bible, performative in their effect. They not only can describe identity, but prescribe it, for better or worse. The bullied child on the playground will tragically believe and become the names he is called. The blessed and

30. For further reading on the oblation of things in general, and the cultural mandate in particular, see: Robert Farrar Capon, *An Offering of Uncles; the Priesthood of Adam and the Shape of the World* (New York: Crossroad, 1982); Darrell Cosden, *The Heavenly Good of Earthly Work* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2013); Andy Crouch, *Culture Making: Recovering Our Creative Calling* (Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity Press, 2013); Makoto Fujimura, *Culture Care: Reconnecting with Beauty for Our Common Life* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Books, 2017); Steven Garber, *Visions of Vocation: Common Grace for the Common Good* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Books, 2014); Michel Jen Pollock, *Keeping Place: Reflections on the Meaning of Home* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Books, 2017); Amy L. Sherman, *Kingdom Calling: Vocational Stewardship for the Common Good* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Books, 2011); R. Paul Stevens, *The Other Six Days: Vocation, Work, and Ministry in Biblical Perspective* (Grand Rapids, MI: W.B. Eerdmans, 2000); John R. W. Stott, *Mission: Rethinking Vocation* (Vancouver, B.C.: Regent College Publishing, 2019).

affirmed child will likewise grow into the ways they have been rightly named as we make oblation of them, offering them to the Lord to be whom he created them to be.

The very naming of creatures can be a loving act. We speak of "terms of endearment" as the names we call each other that show affection. When we are given a nickname in a circle of friends it communicates that we belong. The act of naming not only reflects a love that already exists, but also can contribute to the growth of love. Any child raised on a farm would rather see the no-named cattle go to slaughter than the ones she named. Once named, a thing becomes more beloved.

One of the most powerful forms of naming that we can perform as priests of creation is to name and bless each other's identity and vocation. "You are beloved of God no matter what," or "You are skilled with your hands," or "You are a good listener, with discernment and wisdom beyond your years"—these are ways that we, as the royal priesthood, extend the Edenic call to name creation. Ordained priests have a unique vantage point from which to speak identity and vocation to parishioners, and formal authorization to pronounce absolution and blessing.

Though every kind of noble work involves some form of making oblation of things, perhaps the one that illustrates the point most transparently is the work of the artist. Artists make oblation of the materials and media that they cultivate and manipulate, gratefully offering their work as something of inherent value back up to God, their very self invested in both the raw and reconfigured materials. Every person has a particular vocation, even when it seems less obvious than art-making, in which they too can see their spreadsheet or lesson plan or household chore chart in the same way, an opportunity to make oblation.[31]

31. Though there is not space to develop the theme here, the oblation of things also raises the question of our attitude toward the acquisition of things, especially in light of Jesus' parables and conversations with the wealthy. The oblation of things assumes a relationship to creation in which things are not our master, and that we align our lives with the call to simplicity, stewardship, and generosity we find in scripture.

Making Oblation of Time

God does not exist within the bounds or constraints of time—time is his creation. And like all his creation it is good, figuring right into the beginning of the creation's story as "days" marked time and the progression of the created world, with the seventh day being set apart, holy, the consecration of time for the purpose of rest. God was a worker for six consecutive periods of time. Then God rested for a period of time. God's work-rest rhythm models for us what he commanded for us: to live within a sacred rhythm of time. The Sabbath does not merely get a mention in the beginning, soon to be eclipsed by other grand themes of the biblical story. Sabbath-keeping, and the rest of God into which they could enter, was central to Israel. Sabbath-keeping is one of the Ten Commandments and was a communal identity marker for faithful Jews up to Jesus' day, and even to this day.[32] Sabbath rest is one way of framing the *eschaton* from which faithful Christians draw our hope.[33]

The oblation of time extends beyond Sabbath and into daily and annual rhythms as well, from the morning and evening sacrifices of the temple priests, to the several annual feasts of

32. Recent years have seen a proliferation of books on Sabbath, time, and daily life, an indication of how great is the need for help and the hunger for change. For historical perspective on the topic, see: Jean Pierre de Caussade, *The Sacrament of the Present Moment* (New York: Harper One, 1989); Brother Lawrence, *The Practice of the Presence of God* (Brewster, MA: Paraclete Press, 2010); Benedict, *The Rule of St. Benedict* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1981). Contemporary works include: Lynne M. Baab, *Sabbath Keeping: Finding Freedom in the Rhythms of Rest* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2005); Julie Canlis, *A Theology of the Ordinary* (Wenatchee, WA: Godspeed Press, 2017); Wayne Muller, *Sabbath: Finding Rest, Renewal, and Delight in Our Busy* Lives (New York: Bantam Books, 2000); Kathleen Norris, *Quotidian Mysteries* (Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press International, 1998); A. J. Swoboda, *Subversive Sabbath: The Surprising Power of Rest in a Nonstop World* (Grand Rapids, MI: Brazos Press, 2018); Marva J. Dawn, *Keeping the Sabbath Wholly: Ceasing, Resting, Embracing, Feasting* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 1989); Abraham Joshua Heschel, *The Sabbath, Its Meaning for the Modern Man* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2005); Tish Harrison Warren, *Liturgy of the Ordinary: Sacred Practices in Everyday Life* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2016); Bobby Gross, *Living the Christian Year Time to Inhabit the Story of God: An Introduction and Devotional Guide* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Books, 2009).

33. Hebrews 4:8-10.

Israel, the seventh-year rest for the arable land and, every fifty years, a year of jubilee that released the poor from the oppression of debt.[34]

In everyday life, our oblation of time extends not only to seeing the holy in the mundanity of *chronos* time, but also to a Spirit-sensitive discernment of *kairos* time, which indicates the "right" time for a difficult conversation, a disruptive change or move, or a vocational transition. In our desire to "keep in step with the Spirit," we make oblation of time by considering not only the "where" or "what" of discernment, but also the "when."[35] While the oblation of time is front and center among the practices God commends to his people for a good and beautiful life, it might be, of our four categories, the most neglected in the contemporary church. The church ought to help us resist the cultural denigration of time, with ordained priests leading the way. Not only can ordained priests encourage a personal habit of Sabbath-keeping, but also lead the parish in corporate observance of the church calendar and the four hours of the Book of Common Prayer.

Jesus the Oblate

Jesus is the perfect Oblate. We have all sinned and fallen short of the oblation of people, place, things, and time. We have also fallen short of the oblation of ourselves.[36] But Jesus of Nazareth fulfilled the Law for us, looking into the eyes and heart of every person he encountered, was not mastered by the material things of this world yet made oblation of them as a carpenter

34. For further reading on the holiness of every moment, and a spirituality of time, see: Jean Pierre de Caussade, *The Sacrament of the Present Moment* (New York: Harper One, 1989).

35. Jesus models this in his rhythms of solitude and community, of declaring that "it is not yet my time," and living faithfully within both a *chronos* and *kairos* orientation to time.

36. While oblation of ourselves could be simply a subset of making oblation of "people," it is so central to the other four categories of oblation, and our vocation both in the general and particular sense, that I've reserved it for the next section on holiness.

revealing the strength and beauty of wood, or turning water to wine. He lived perfectly in the rest of God, at God's speed. In his humanity Jesus offered up all creation to his Father through daily embodied life, with gratitude and wonder, honoring its true purpose and value. In his divinity Jesus assumed all creation into himself, the second Adam, and offered himself up to God as a sacrifice, the once-for-all perfect act of oblation.[37] Through his incarnation, passion, and ascension he gathered all creation, all people, places, things, and time into himself. And then he gave himself as the supreme freewill offering and sacrifice to the Father, and as a gift to the world. As we repent and believe, we now are united to him, participating in his oblation, becoming oblates ourselves.[38]

Sacramental Spirituality

This way of framing Christian life and devotion, through the oblation of people, places, time, and things is not a comprehensive articulation of the Christian life, but it comes close. It does articulate an emphasis on what might best be described as a "Sacramental Spirituality." Our fumbling and failing oblation of people, places, time, and things, not to mention the oblation of ourselves, finds redemptive and glorious good news in the passion of Jesus Christ, where he made oblation of himself. Jesus commanded his followers to remember him in one way, at table

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37. "He has no need, like those high priests, to offer sacrifices daily, first for his own sins and then for those of the people, since he did this once for all when he offered up himself" (Hebrews 7:27). In the closest thing Anglicanism has to a Reformation statement of faith, The 39 Articles of Religion, the thirty-first article is about the final and full oblation for the forgiveness of sins. "XXXI. Of the one Oblation of Christ finished upon the Cross. The Offering of Christ once made in that perfect redemption, propitiation, and satisfaction, for all the sins of the whole world, both original and actual; and there is none other satisfaction for sin, but that alone" (*The Book of Common Prayer*, 864).

38. The monastic tradition invites affiliation for people who live, work, and marry in the "ordinary" world to nevertheless participate in the devotional lifestyle, community, and habits of the monastery as "oblates." These oblates have not "renounced the world" in order to become celibate monks who take the vows of the order, yet are attached to the monastic community as ones who have offered themselves as an oblation, a living sacrifice unto God.

with each other united around his broken body and shed blood, as presented and consumed in the bread and wine of the meal. This act is called "Holy Eucharist," or the "Great Thanksgiving." Just as Jesus the Great High Priest represented all creation on the cross, before the Father, offering himself and all creation up, so do we at table. The body and wine that represent the work of Christ, also represent the work of our own hands.[39] They are grapes and wheat that have been cultivated from the ground, then manipulated and fermented to yield cultural artifacts, made by farmer-priests, baker-priests, and vintner-priests who offered up creation in their work. The ordained priest may uniquely be called the priest at the Eucharistic table, but the whole royal priesthood are the priests of creation. Dr. Peter Leithart, theologian and author, in a short sketch of what he calls a "Eucharistic Theory of Culture," writes,

> Not only on the Lord's day, but every day: We offer our works to God in worship, specifically with an act of thanksgiving. When we bring bread and wine and, by implication, everything we make and do before the Lord, we do it with thanksgiving. This is remarkable: After all, we made the bread and wine. And yet we thank God for them. We thank Him for the products of our hands, because even the things we make, even our works are His gifts to us…. And having given thanks at the table, we are trained to live lives of continuous Eucharist, continual thanksgiving, giving thanks, as Paul says, for all things at all times. We bring what we have made to God. But He doesn't take it from us. We bring what we have to God, and He shares it with us. And so the things we make become means of communion with God. The Eucharist is the way the world ought to be: Raw creation cultivated to grain and grapes. Cultivated creation brought to its fulfillment by cooking. Cooked creation enjoyed in the presence of God. Cooked creation enjoyed together, by a community of worshipers. Cooked creation given in praise and received with thanksgiving. The final end of all things is the marriage supper of the lamb, and in the Lord's Supper we anticipate that final feast, the feast that is the culmination of all creation.[40]

One of the Eucharist Prayers of the ACNA's Book of Common Prayer beautifully captures the act of oblation. Representatives of the congregation bring the bread and wine and

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39. To be clear, our offering adds nothing to Jesus' offering. Ours is an offering of praise, accomplishing nothing for ourselves. His is an offering that atones.

40. Peter Leithart, "A Eucharistic Theory of Culture," Leithart, April 13, 2016, accessed June 16, 2020, https://www.patheos.com/blogs/leithart/2016/04/a-eucharistic-theory-of-culture/.

the offerings to the table of the Lord. Not only do the bread and wine represent both the passion of Jesus Christ and the oblation of farmers, bakers, and vintners, but also the financial offerings of the people. The financial offerings represent the oblation of people's everyday lives as priests of the world, their work in which they daily make oblation of people, places, things, and time—and of their very selves. When these cultural products and currency (the fruits of labor) reach the front, the following exchange occurs:

> ***Priest****: Yours, O Lord, is the greatness, and the power, and the glory, and the victory, and the majesty: for everything in heaven and on earth is yours; yours is the Kingdom, O Lord, and you are exalted as Head above all. All things come from you, O Lord,*
>
> ***People****: And of your own have we given you*.[41]

All people, places, things, and time have come from God. When we give these four gifts back as an offering to God, we are recognizing their value. They each have beauty and worth, because they find their source in Him, and because they cost us something to give back to him. We have eyes to see the particular beauty and worth of everything God has made. Our loving contemplation of them recognizes them as good gifts from God. We see, touch, smell, taste, and listen to them. Regarding people in particular who alone are made in God's image, we seek to know, honor, empower, and care for them—seek their flourishing in the way of the gospel. Regarding places, things, and time, we use them, transform them, combine them, and make things out of them, ourselves becoming co-creators with God. As we do this for the good of the world and to the glory of God, we are making oblation, lifting them up to God as gifts back to the Giver of all things.

41. *The Book of Common Prayer*, 115.

Making Oblation as an Ordained Priesthood

Making Oblation of God's People

With this understanding of what it means to make oblation, we can now apply it to the specific work of the ordained priesthood. The parish priest who sees parishioners as a means to a ministry end, or as candidates to fulfill a task, is not making oblation of the parishioner; nor is the parish priest who is more preoccupied with church growth and metrics than the parishioners themselves.

To make oblation of God's people is to love the people genuinely. One of the most important questions that clergy can ask themselves is, "Do I love the people, the bride of Christ?" To make oblation of God's people is to engage in pastoral care and counseling, to be a perpetual learner in the cure of souls, to engage in the ministry of small talk, to thank people, visit them in times of need, and bear their burdens. One of the key priestly opportunities clergy have to make oblation of parishioners is to "name" them, to call out their identity and bless it, to give words to their sorrows, and to commission them in their callings. This naming is a profound act of oblation. Illustrating the power of "naming," a television commercial cuts from one individual to another, each standing by their beloved Chevy truck and speaking a proper name. The commercial concludes with a voiceover declaring, "When you love something, you name it."[42]

42. More poignantly and painfully illustrating the point, two days after a church shooting outside of San Antonio in November 2017, an NPR story talked about the effort by law-enforcement and families of the victims no longer to speak the name of the gunman. Why? The reason was to avoid glorifying the gunman. There is glory in the name.

Naturally, there are limits to what any given person can carry. The priest cannot be all things to all people all the time. And with larger churches, the senior priest will be even more limited in their availability for pastoral care and counseling. Clergy can still make oblation of people by building a culture of authentic community, a relational community that conveys the intrinsic value of every single human being, regardless of their usefulness, beauty, wealth, or status. Clergy can make oblation by developing programs and lay leadership who lovingly welcome new members, walk with parishioners through crisis or take communion to them in hospitals or their homes.

Making Oblation Before God's People

The supreme act of making oblation is Holy Eucharist, which gathers up all creation, the body and blood of Jesus together with the world in which he was incarnated, in the elements of bread and wine. The communal act of offering this up to God is an act of offering ourselves to him as well, simultaneously receiving from him or, rather, receiving *him*, the Real Presence of Christ in the consecrated elements. The sacrament of baptism and other sacramental rites each involve the intersection of the uncreated Triune God with creation, whether it is the waters of baptism, the oil of holy unction, or the bodies of the bride and groom and their rings. These are all moments of sacramental leadership by the clergy, making oblation before God's people.

Equipping God's People to Make Oblation

Clergy make oblation of God's people by teaching and equipping them to become more human, central to which is making oblation of their own lives and world. As noted above,

making oblation involves the offering up of all people, places, things, and time to the fullness and beauty of what they were created to be, to name them with their true identity and assist them in fulfilling the *telos* of their existence to the praise of God's glory.

Specifically, this might look like teaching and equipping on Sabbath-keeping, the sacredness of work and vocation, sacramental spirituality, and creation care. It might also involve providing opportunities for parishioners to engage in some of the practices that flow from these teachings, like a retreat of silence, group vocational discernment, parish quiet days, and vocational affinity groups.

Making Oblation of Place

Clergy can lead their parishioners to make oblation of place in two respects: the various places/neighborhoods where parishioners reside and the collective place/neighborhood where the congregation gathers. Each place is unique and has a life of its own. There are residents and workers in the vicinity, a rhythm and vibe, a history and a future that's already in the works. The royal priesthood is called to love where they live, not simply caring for their house or apartment, but also acting with genuine care for the people and places of the neighborhood.

This is likewise true of the church facility, the congregation's collective home and neighborhood, where clergy can lead congregations to learn about the people, the places, the history, the beauty (hidden and overt), and the future of the church neighborhood. Congregations can learn to love and serve that particular place on earth.

Clergy can call their congregation to action in three categories of making oblation of place—three ways they can love where they live. First, they can love their literal neighbors, the

people who live around the neighborhood through serving the needs of the neighborhood, pointing people to Jesus, and pursuing social justice and community development in the neighborhood. They can also love the world God made, the creation all around them, teaching on a biblical theology of creation, implementing practices of creation care, and seeking the protection and appreciation of the flora and fauna around the church. Lastly, clergy can lead congregations that make oblation of place by loving what we make of the world. As co-creators made in the image of God, humans make material culture. Clergy are acting as priests when they make oblation of the built environment and lead their congregations to do the same. Practically, this might look like facilitating encounters with the built environment through neighborhood tours, installing public art on the property, getting involved in neighborhood associations, knowing the history or ethos of the place in which God has planted them.

This geographic and local practice of priesthood, after all, is precisely how God chose to bring redemption to his world. Len Hjalmarson writes, "Through the Incarnation our experience is anchored firmly in the world of things and people and places. At the table we practice becoming a body that is both present and future, both visible and invisible."[43]

Making Oblation of Time

Priests make oblation of time as they lead the congregation through the church calendar, annually rehearsing the story of Jesus and the church. They also mark time weekly by gathering God's people for worship on the Sabbath, an in-gathering and out-sending that punctuates a parishioner's weekly life. Those clergy and/or parishes that pray the hours make oblation of time with daily rhythms of prayer. Clergy also mark significant times of people's lives through sacred

43. Len Hjalmarson, *Introduction to a Theology of Place* (self-pub, 2014).

services and ceremonies: birth, baptism, confirmation, marriage, and burial. Learning to make oblation of time is one of the most urgent needs of the church in the technological age in which we live, an age in which the barriers of transportation, information, and communication have nearly collapsed. Time, under such circumstances, is compressed and profaned. Now more than ever the ordained priests of this compressed and digital age must model, teach, and lead the royal priesthood to re-sacralize, or make oblation of, time.

God's Holiness and Ours

Throughout all history, the holy God has desired to dwell among his people and be their God, in mutually loyal relationship. When human beings live within that design, in God's presence with loyal love, they too are holy. The vocation of biblical priesthood is to facilitate this holiness, this proximity to the holy God and the holy lives that flow out of that relational nearness. The first category concerns practicing God's presence; the second concerns reflecting God's character. The word "presence" encapsulates one of the most dominant themes of the entire Bible.[44] The late New Testament scholar, Gordon Fee, once called the word "presence" a "most delicious word."[45] We are indeed invited by the Psalmist to "taste and see that the Lord is good."[46] The Triune God, before creation and for all eternity, is relational, each person of the

44. J. Ryan Lister demonstrates this general theme in *The Presence of God: Its Place in the Storyline of Scripture and the Story of Our Lives* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2015). G. K. Beale shows how temple imagery is central to this biblical theme in *The Temple and the Church's Mission: A Biblical Theology of the Temple* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2004). A more accessible adaption is available as G. K. Beale and Mitchell Kim, *God Dwells among Us: Expanding Eden to the Ends of the Earth* (Nottingham: IVP, 2015). Most relevant to the age in which we live, is the Holy Spirit as God's indwelling presence, comprehensively exposited and explored by Gordon Fee in *God's Empowering Presence: the Holy Spirit in the Letters of Paul* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2011).

45. From a lecture delivered at Regent College, Vancouver, Canada, circa 1999.

46. Psalm 34:8.

Trinity present to the other in loving relationship. When the Triune God creates humanity in his image, therefore, humans are also relational, created to enjoy mutual presence with their Creator and each other. Holiness is primarily concerned with, on the one hand, the nearness of God and, on the other, the character of God, both of which are relational to the core. Humanity may draw near to God and be reconciled, through Christ, and be transformed to bear the marks of God's own holy character. The greatest mark is love.

Holiness and the Priesthoods of Scripture

Priesthood and Holiness in the Garden

Adam and Eve, as we have seen, were the first priests in the garden-temple. The garden was the dwelling place of God with no original barriers to God's presence. Humanity has never lived in greater proximity to the presence of the holy God, nor lived in a higher state of holiness and wholeness, than the first humans in the garden. They were naked and unafraid in relation to each other; they lived in close connection to other creatures, whom Adam personally named, and to the land, which they cultivated. The biblical language, that Adam and Eve were to "work and keep" the land, is the same language later used to describe the vocation of priests in the tabernacle. Adam and Eve, before the fall, were priests living whole and holy lives in the intimate presence of the Triune God. But they soon distanced themselves from God's loving presence and commands. All humanity since Adam and Eve has lived east of Eden, far from God and his ways, but God keeps pursuing presence with his creatures. He wants to be near to humanity. Even in the garden, when Adam and Eve disobeyed God and hid in shame, God came after them, calling out to them, wanting to be near them again.

Priesthood and Holiness in the Tabernacle/Temple

God's desire to dwell among his people and be their God continues in the biblical story with the most seminal moment in the history of the Jewish people, the Exodus. God creates a people, through Abraham, who grow in numbers while in bondage to their Egyptian masters. God delivers them and, as they sojourn through the wilderness, God instructs them in how to facilitate his presence among them through a priesthood he creates within the tribe of Levi. He instructs his people to create a Tabernacle where he will dwell and travel with them. Exodus 29, which focuses on the commissioning of the priesthood God has just established, reminds us of the entire point of having priests to serve in the tabernacle, "I will dwell in the midst of the Israelites, and I will be their God."[47] As we have seen, Exodus 29 concludes by reiterating not only this purpose for the tabernacle, but also by God confirming that his desire to be among his people was the purpose of the entire Exodus rescue.

After Israel enters the Promised Land, a permanent home, he dwells among them in the Temple that Solomon built. Throughout the ensuing years one of the main tasks of the priesthood is to facilitate the proximity between God and his people. They are mediators of the presence of God, helping the people to approach Yahweh, the Holy One of Israel, safely despite their unclean and ungodly ways. These priests are also called to cultivate their own holiness, according to God's instruction.

While the most iconic image of priesthood bible-readers might have is the priest at altar offering sacrifices, priests also functioned as teachers and governing leaders, which required discernment, making distinctions, and making decisions. The common denominator between all

47. Exodus 29:45.

three of these is, not surprisingly, presence; they want the presence of the Lord. The holiness of God can prevent our nearness. Conversely, the nearness of God fosters our holiness. The two are crucially connected.

Distinguishing between that which is clean and unclean enables priests to facilitate proximity to God's holy presence in the Tabernacle and Temple. Decision-making in battle, as with the use of the Ummin and Thummin to seek the will of God, facilitates his presence in battle, which ensures victory. By making distinctions and decisions, priests facilitate national and personal holiness. Priests were also frequently the community judges, discerning justice as people brought their cases before them. Priests judged according to the Law and directed people in the right keeping of the law, which is God's good gift for how to live as his people enjoying his presence. Holiness and the presence of God go hand in hand; priests were at the nexus of both, for the sake of God's people.

Priesthood and Holiness in Jesus

Jesus our great High Priest is the mediator that reconciles the distance, bringing God and humanity near each other for the glory of God and the holiness of his people. The ultimate divine approach, when God comes near to his people, is in the person of Jesus Christ, Immanuel, "God with us." Jesus is the Temple, the supreme dwelling place of God among his people. He is also the supreme expression of personal holiness, whose only desire to is to do as his Father tells him, to live a totally surrendered life, even to the point of crucifixion, where he declares to his Father, "not my will, but thine." Jesus not only modeled holiness but achieved it for all who repent and believe. He is the great high priest, who is able to sympathize with our weaknesses, tempted just

as we are, yet without sin, enabling us "with confidence to *draw near* to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need."[48]

One of the most common words for the salvation Jesus brought is *sodzo*, a multivalent word that conveys the restoration of the whole person: heart, mind, body and soul.[49] Jesus achieved this for others through his incarnation, his healings and deliverances, his gracious words and actions and, most supremely, through his Passion. Indeed, "greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends."[50]

Jesus was the embodiment of God's desire to "dwell in the midst" of his people and "be their God." The first part of this formulation implies what only God can do, dwell among us. The latter part, "be their God," requires the cooperation of his people. Life in the presence of God requires our surrender to the lordship of Jesus, our repentance and obedience, our cooperative friendship with God as a grateful response to his goodness. We see this in Jesus' final words, a commission at the end of Matthew's gospel to make disciples and teach them to obey everything Jesus commanded. In sum, Jesus embodied the holy presence of God among his people, modeled a holy and whole lifestyle, accomplished that holiness for those who trust him, and called his followers to holy lives that includes teaching others also to live holy lives.

Priesthood and Holiness in God's People

Upon his ascension, Jesus then sends the Holy Spirit as the empowering *presence* of God, to fill and indwell his people, the power of God for personal holiness ("fruits of the Spirit") and

48. Hebrews 4:14-16.

49. This word occurs 114 in the New Testament.

50. John 15:13.

witness. God's people dwell in, and are indwelt by, the presence of God. It is only by this empowering presence that they can embody and facilitate holiness as a royal priesthood. In his first epistle, Peter contrasts those who don't believe ("they disobey the word") with the holiness of God's people: "*But you* are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, *that* you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light."[51] As God's chosen royal priesthood, God's people (1) are "a *holy* nation"—the royal priesthood lives holy lives of obedience, in "the marvelous light," in contrast to those who don't believe; (2) are his "possession"—the royal priesthood *belongs* to God, language of relational proximity; (3) proclaim the excellencies of God—the royal priesthood facilitates the encounter and approach of others to God, by proclaiming the gospel they have witnessed. In these two verses the presence of God, the holiness of his people, and their witness to his goodness merge in the imagery of priesthood.

The key New Testament text that articulates the holiness of God's people in priestly terms is Romans 12:1, where Paul paints a picture of the Christian as a priest standing before an altar in the Temple, offering a sacrifice. That which is being offered, however, is oneself. "I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship." We are both the priests making the offering and the sacrifice being offered, just like Jesus, our lives joined to his. Our self-offering is holy and acceptable to God because it is joined to Jesus' self-offering.

51. 1 Peter 2:7-8.

The Royal Priesthood as a Community of Oblates

In the tradition of monasteries, an Oblate is a person who does not take monastic vows to enter the community but is nevertheless attached to a particular monastic community. Oblates make occasional visits to the monastery, maintaining relational connection and living by the rule of their Order while in the midst of their everyday life and work outside the monastery. This is the technical use of the term "oblate" in church tradition. This is a tremendously apt term, however, to describe every follower of Jesus. Every Christian's central call is to offer the whole of their lives, a living sacrifice, up to God in gratitude for his grace, and the many gifts he has given us. Just after the consecration of the elements in the Anglican Eucharistic Rite, the priest then says, "sanctify us also," signifying that our lives are offered up with the bread and wine to receive the Real Presence of Jesus. The Christian can be defined as an Oblate, a person who daily lives Romans 12:1, making oblation of their whole life.[52]

Everything in life is gift, everything *given* to humanity. The body is given. Individuals do not wholly create the self; it is given as gift. Human identity, abilities and experiences, personal consciousness, desires, one's family—all creatures with intrinsic worth and beauty; they are all gifts. The financial offering, paired next to Holy Eucharist in Anglican liturgies, gives beautiful expression to the givenness of our lives and world. More hours of the days go to daily work than any other single human endeavor. Bodies, hearts, and minds are engaged to work faithfully, for the good of one's own household, and the for the common good. Each person has been given people, places, things, and time with whom/which to work with gladness and singleness of heart. And therefore, the holy life is a combination of grateful wonder and stewardship of what God

52. At Christ Church Anglican, Austin, Texas, one of the core values is "Whole Life Discipleship." It is a call to make oblation of the whole person (body/mind/soul), the whole of life (every arena/context), and the whole lifespan (a long obedience in the same direction).

has given, on the one hand, and giving it all back to him, on the other. The Christian life is a living sacrifice, offered up to God, holy and acceptable in Christ.

Holiness and the Ordained Priesthood

Ordained Priests Facilitate Congregational Proximity to the Holy Presence of God

Perhaps the most direct and literal parallel between the work of Levitical priests in the Tabernacle or Temple and Anglican priests today is in their role in facilitating proximity to the holy presence of God in the context of congregational worship. The work of ministry that most quintessentially facilitates this proximity is Holy Eucharist. Here the veil between heaven and earth is rent, Christ's sacrifice upon the cross for the sins of humanity is represented and remembered, the once for all self-offering, just as Jesus commanded.[53]

Though Anglicans are decidedly Protestant, there are various positions along the continuum of Eucharistic theology, from mere memorial to something just short of a Roman Catholic view of transubstantiation. This tension between certain aspects of the continental Reformation and Roman Catholic teaching is a feature of Anglicanism, often resolved by the *via media*, or "middle way."

Broadly speaking, most Anglicans view the elements of Holy Eucharist as signifying the Real Presence of Christ, which is something more than mere memorial and something less than transubstantiation. Another, more colloquial, way to put it is that "something happens"—that upon the consecration of the elements by the priest, they become more than they were. Though Christ is present in all times and all places, there is a concentrated presence, in the particular place, time, and actions of the priest and the elements—a concentrated presence of the Holy God,

53. Hebrews 7:27; 1 Corinthians 11:24-25.

which cannot be entirely articulated; it is a holy mystery like the Holy Trinity, the Incarnation, and the human/divine words of Scripture, which all contain an element of paradox.[54]

Within the Anglican tradition, one must have been ordained a priest in order to consecrate the elements; there can be no Holy Eucharist without a priest or bishop doing so. Anglicanism contains a variety of views, regarding the logic of this requirement. At the more evangelical Protestant end of the Anglican spectrum are those who see this requirement primarily as a matter of church order. Because the Lord's Supper, the argument from church order goes, was instituted by our Lord as one of only two ordinances, it is a focal practice of the church at which only those who are trusted and credentialed leaders in the community should preside. Because Eucharist may be withheld from notorious sinners, is often tied to baptism and church membership, and is a means of grace, the view goes, the administration of the sacrament belongs to those most trained and responsible for the flock. Few within Anglicanism hold to this view, though the Diocese of Sydney, Australia would go so far as to encourage lay presiding of Holy Eucharist.

The Anglo-Catholic parts of the church hold a high view of apostolic succession and believe there is an ontological change in the priest—they become vicars, or representatives, of Christ at the Table. They re-present, or "stand in," as visible representatives of the invisible Christ, who is the Gracious Host welcoming others to the feast.

54. Holy Eucharist as encounter with the holy presence of God is not simply an abstract theological idea. As a priest I frequently hear people speak of the power of this encounter, and how much it means to them to participate in regular Communion. I don't have to hear them tell these stories in order to know it is true, however; I see it on their faces, the tears, the sorrow, the joy, the remorse, and the eager hope displayed in their countenance as they receive the elements. At the same time, the aesthetics and/or mystery of Christ's Real Presence in the elements are not enough to nourish the faith. Sacrament must be accompanied by faithful reading and exposition of the Word in congregational gatherings. For further reading on Holy Eucharist see, Henry R. McAdoo and Kenneth W. Stevenson, *The Mystery of the Eucharist in the Anglican Tradition* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 1995); Gordon T. Smith, *A Holy Meal: the Lord's Supper in the Life of the Church* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2005); N. T. Wright, *The Meal Jesus Gave Us* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2002).

As with most of the Protestant-Roman Catholic doctrinal tensions, most Anglicans hold to the *via media* on this matter. Most Anglicans place a higher value than other Protestants on Holy Eucharist, celebrating it more frequently and generally with more reverence and liturgical ceremony. Most Anglicans would likewise understand ordained priests to be more than credentialed leaders who have the right mix of gifts and skills; most Anglicans would also see ordained priests to serve at least mildly as a sacramental sign of Christ—shepherds who are icons of the chief shepherd, heirs of a *charism* granted through the laying on of hands and prayer of a bishop.

Ordained Priests Model Personal Holiness in the Congregation

As priests to a kingdom of priests, ordained Anglican priests cultivate their own life of holiness, as an essential part of leading others into holiness. This was expected of Levitical priests, for example, who were required to wash themselves ritually before making a sacrifice at the altar in service of God and his people.[55] Jesus, as the Great High Priest, likewise modeled a holy life and offered himself as a pure, holy, and perfect sacrifice. Peter reminds his readers to "shepherd the flock of God that is among you,… not domineering over those in your charge, but *being examples* to the flock."[56] The church fathers wrote and taught frequently on this topic. Gregory the Great reminds us,

> The spiritual director [ordained spiritual leader] should be the first in service so that by his way of life he might show the laity how to live, and so that the flock (which follows the voice of the shepherd) may advance all the better by his example than by his words alone. For indeed, the one who is compelled by his position to speak of the highest things

55. Exodus 30:17-21.

56. 1 Peter 5:2-3.

> is also compelled, by necessity, to show the highest things by his example. For his voice more easily penetrates his listeners' hearts when his way of life commends what he says. Thus, what he enjoins by speaking he helps by showing how it is to be done.[57]

Of course, all human ministers are just as frail and weak as the rest of humanity, dependent on the grace of Christ, and should not have unrealistic expectations placed upon them. Ordained ministers are called to a higher standard when it comes to the sins and vices that might disqualify one from ministry, but otherwise await the fullness of the coming kingdom in their own lives just as much as their parishioners.

Ordained Priests Cultivate Holistic Holiness in the Congregation

Baptism, one of the two dominical sacraments in Anglicanism, alongside Holy Eucharist, also involves the ordained priest in the holiness of God and his followers. It represents the washing away of sin, death to the old self, and the birth of the new self in the risen Christ. Anglicanism also recognizes several other sacramental rites, priestly practices that have a sacramental quality about them, though they are not considered sacraments themselves.

These other five rites engage the priest in forms of personal holiness/wholeness in relation to God, others, and the self: Confession and Absolution, which reconciles the penitent who has wandered far from God; Confirmation, which involves growth in holiness through catechesis and affirms the baptismal vows; Holy Matrimony, which is the ultimate expression of proximity and presence, as male and female become one flesh in body and spirit, just at Jesus and the church are one; Holy Orders, upon which one enters a life vowed to serving and leading the people of God into God's presence and the holiness that flows from life in God; and Holy Unction, which is the anointing of the sick to restore the body to wholeness.

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57. Gregory, *The Book of Pastoral Rule* (Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimirs Seminary Press, 2007), 51.

The ordained priests also pronounce the blessing of God upon the people, just as Aaron and his priestly successors did when they declared, "The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make his face to shine upon you and be gracious to you; the Lord lift up his countenance upon you and give you peace."[58] The double use of face/countenance here speaks of the nearness and intimacy of God, his immediate presence. To have the face or countenance of the Lord upon us is to have his full attention and concern.

Lastly, the ordained priests are responsible to oversee the programming, structures, and ministries of the church to help others grow in holiness, "to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ."[59] Most churches achieve this through some combination of Christian education, small groups, outreaches and mission trips, prayer meetings and Bible studies, worship, service, and commissioning their parishioners into mission through their daily vocations. It is not the work of the ordained priest alone to personally teach and make whole-life disciples. To the contrary, it is the work of the people of God to do these works of ministry. The priest, however, must give good and godly oversight to empower and facilitate this value in the life of the community.

Priests facilitate proximity to God. They help people come into his presence boldly. They identify the places and ways God is already present in people's lives. They warn against insouciant approaches to God and invite repentance. Priests also model, though imperfectly, a mature Christian life while creating congregational systems and a culture that fervently pursues holiness and wholeness in Christ.

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58. Numbers 6:24-26.

59. Ephesians 4:12-13.

God's Word and Ours

One of the primary ways priests facilitate encounters between God and his people is through divine speech and human language—through God's Word and our words. So far we have seen that biblical priests are mediators who face God on behalf of his creation and face creation on behalf of God. Within God's creation, the biblical story highlights the relationship between God and his *human* creation in particular, but is inclusive of all things created—people, places, things, and time. First, when making oblation priests are mediators who represent creation to God, lifting it up to him for the praise of his glory. Regarding holiness, priests are mediators who represent God's holiness and facilitate ours, especially by helping God's people to live with loyal love in proximity to his presence.

The next way in which priests are mediators, to which we now turn, is the third role in the priestly quadrilateral: God's Word and ours. Another way to put it is to speak of God's communication to us, and ours to him, or God's revelation to us (Word) and our response to him (prayer). This category is intimately linked to the prior focus on holiness and the presence of God. The purpose of presence is not mere *spatial* proximity—it is personal *encounter*. God desires encounter with us, a session, an intimate exchange of being. While this can and does happen wordlessly, Word is a central mode of divine encounter in the Scriptures.

Holy Scripture begins with a display of the primacy and power of the Word of God. He speaks people, places, things, and time into being. Throughout the rest of the Old Testament he communicates by word through such diverse messengers as angels, bushes, donkeys, prophets,

and most supremely through Jesus Christ. Throughout history, God's primary way of communicating with humanity, and ours with him, is through words.[60]

God's Word and Ours in the Priesthoods of Scripture

God's Word and ours in the garden-temple

Before Adam and Eve even existed as the first priests, God spoke. The whole cosmos, including human beings, is created *ex nihilo* by God's speech. Our very existence is the result of a divine speech act. One of the first faculties God gives humanity is speech, commissioning Adam to name the animals. God converses with Adam and Even in the garden, calling out to them after they rebelled and hid. Adam replies—the first call and response recorded in Scripture. All prayer is a response to the voice and stirrings of God; Adam's response is the first such prayer.

God's Word and ours in the Levitical priesthood

Teaching God's Word to his people is one of the lesser-known roles of Levitical priests, yet a clear and central part of their purpose. God speaks directly to Aaron with this charge: "You are to distinguish between the holy and the common, and between the unclean and the clean, and you are to *teach the people of Israel all the statutes that the Lord has spoken* to them by

60. Word is not the only way God reveals who he is, just the primary one. He also shows himself through his mighty acts and the priorities and values reflected in the kind of people he chooses, as well as the way he works in the history of Israel. Word is, however, the most prevalent and important way that he communicates, and certainly the most personal, which is of the essence of what it means to be Triune and make humanity in his image. Just as Word is not the only way God can communicate himself to us, neither are words the only way we can communicate with God. Many forms of contemplative prayer involve silently communing with God. Likewise, our loving, dependent, courageous, and sacrificial actions "speak" to God our desires and devotion.

Moses."[61] It's hard to miss the echo of this charge in Jesus' last words in Matthew, commissioning the royal priesthood likewise to "*teach them* everything I have commanded you." Just as Moses was commissioned to teach all Israel the statutes God had spoken to them, so the apostles were commissioned to teach all nations the commandments Jesus had spoken to them.

Teaching the Law was one of the Levitical priesthood's most important roles, highlighted in Moses' final blessing of Israel. Before he dies, Moses declares that the priestly descendants of Levi "shall *teach* Jacob your rules and Israel your law; they shall put incense before you and whole burnt offerings on your altar."[62] Later in her history, the message of the prophets hold Israel's priests to account for *failing to teach* the law, as seen in Malachi, who declares that "the lips of a priest should preserve knowledge, and men should seek instruction from his mouth; for he is the messenger of the Lord of hosts."[63] Each of these references to teaching are explicitly speaking of the words of the Law, given to Moses for Israel to follow.

Malone shows how the teaching role of priests is related to the previous role we discussed, God's holiness and ours: "The Aaronic priesthood mediates between God and his chosen people in all senses of that English verb. The priests *communicate* the standards of holiness that God expects and *facilitate* this holiness through the sacrificial system. The result is the successful *reconciliation* of humanity to God."[64]

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61. Leviticus 10:10-11.

62. Deuteronomy 33:10.
63. Malachi 2:7.

64. Andrew S Malone, *God's Mediators: A Biblical Theology of Priesthood* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2017), 38, italics in original.

Levitical priests also communicate with God on behalf of the people. We just saw in Moses' final blessing that the priests "shall put incense before you."[65] Incense in Scripture represents the intercessions of God's people.[66] Priests also wore a vestment, called an ephod, into which were sewn twelve stones representing the twelve tribes of Israel. Not only the number is significant, but possibly also the choice of material: stones. At several points in Israel's history, stones were used to remember the goodness of God. Thus, the ephod with stones upon the chest of the priest as he entered the presence of God—this was embodied and enacted intercession. The priests literally and figuratively carried the people of God with him into God's holy presence, remembering them upon his heart.

God's Word and ours in the priesthood of Jesus

Mirroring the opening lines of Genesis, John opens his account of Jesus saying, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God."[67] There could be no more intimate association with God and Word than this, here identifying the very *being* of God with Word (*Logos*). So far in John 1 we only see that God *is* Word, but a few verses later we see that Word is also the way God *communicates* with humanity through the incarnation: "The Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth."[68] God, who is Word, becomes flesh in order to reveal to

65. Deuteronomy 33:10.

66. Psalm 141:1-2; Revelation 5:8, 8:3-4.

67. John 1:1.

68. John 1:14.

us his glory, the Living Word. Jesus *was* the Word in his pre-incarnate existence, and he *embodied* the Word in his human person. Lastly, Jesus *spoke* the Word in his teachings and conversations.

By the end of the New Testament period, we have more speech from God in written form, divinely inspired, conditioned also by historical and personal circumstance. The two Testaments combine to give us the Word of God written, commended to us in Hebrews 4:12, "For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart."

Jesus also explicitly fulfills the mediatorial role of a priest communicating *to* God on *our* behalf. In John 17 we see him in action in what is commonly called his high priestly prayer before he goes to the cross. Jesus is also shown to be our "advocate with the Father," "who is at the right hand of God…interceding for us."[69] The author of Hebrews tells us that, "He holds his priesthood permanently, because he continues forever. Consequently, he is able to save to the uttermost those who draw near to God through him, since he always lives to make intercession for them."[70] He even intercedes for those who persecute him, as seen in his cry from the cross, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."[71] Jesus communicates the heart of God *to us*, and on behalf of us *to God*.

69. 1 John 2:1; Romans 8:34.

70. Hebrews 7:25.

71. Luke 23:34.

God's Word and ours in the royal priesthood

To be the royal priesthood is to facilitate communication between God and others. We receive God's Word for the sake of others, that is, for *each other* and for the world, the latter of which will be taken up in the next section on priests as witnesses.[72] The former concerns our teaching of God's Word to each other in the church. This was part of the Great Commission, the charge to teach the baptized all of Jesus' commands. Paul mentors young Timothy, as he grows in his own ministry, with the reminder that "all Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness."[73] Paul elsewhere makes explicit that the reception of God's Word is *for the sake of others*: "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing *one another* in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God."[74] We exercise our priesthood, as the church, by ministering God's Word to each other.

The royal priesthood also mediates the concerns of the world before God. Through confession of the failings of the church and the world, by voicing creation's praise, giving thanks on behalf of others, or making petitions on behalf of other individuals, society, and the world—these are all ways that the church lives out her priesthood in communication and communion

72. Of course, first and foremost, Christian disciples receive God's Word for ourselves, to guide and nourish us, and lead us to our own encounter with the Living Word. But that is not a priestly interaction with God's Word; it's simply communication from God to recipient. The question taken up in this section is, "how do we the church, in our *priestly* role, mediate God's Word to *others*?"

73. 2 Timothy 3:16.

74. Colossians 3:16.

with God.[75] God's dwelling place is a house of prayer.[76] We are even commanded by Jesus to pray for our enemies.[77]

God's Word and Ours in the Ordained Priesthood

The practice most closely associated in the mind of the average churchgoer (and even the unchurched) with the ordained priesthood is likely preaching. It is certainly the most public, the time and place when the majority of the congregation gathers, with time set apart specifically to hear from God through the sermon. As priest, the ordained minister stands between God and congregation, having listened to God in his Word and faithfully communicating God's message through one's own personality, contextualized for the particular people, historical moment, and place in which the sermon is delivered. John Stott, Anglicanism's most influential preacher of the past 150 years, writes,

> Preaching is indispensable to Christianity. Without preaching a necessary part of its authenticity has been lost. For Christianity is, in its very essence, a religion of the Word of God. No attempt to understand Christianity can succeed which overlooks or denies the truth that the living God has taken the initiative to reveal himself savingly to fallen humanity; or that his self-revelation has been given by the most straightforward means of communication known to us, namely by a word and words; or that he calls upon those who have heard his Word to speak it to others.[78]

Because this is such a central role of the ordained minister, so many excellent books have been published that address the theology of preaching, the study of the biblical text, and the craft

75. 1 Timothy 2:1-2; Ephesians 6:18; James 5:13-16; Revelation 5:8.

76. Matthew 21:13

77. Luke 6:28.

78. John R. W. Stott, *Between Two Worlds: The Art of Preaching in the Twentieth Century* (Grand Rapids, MI: W.B. Eerdmans, 2000), 15.

and delivery of the sermon that I will not here expound on the preaching ministry of the priest.[79] I will, however, state the obvious but oft-neglected imperative that biblical priests do not deliver their own messages to the people of God. They face God's people on behalf of God, delivering *his* message. This faithfulness to God's Word is the *sine qua non* of preaching, and definitional of the role of priesthood.

Not only do ordained priests communicate God's Word to the people, they also teach the people to read and listen to God's Word for themselves. Part of the priestly ministry of the Word is to lead the congregation into a reflective and daily devotional life in Holy Scripture, not depending only on the ordained priesthood for biblical nourishment.

Finally, deserving of further attention as one of the ways that priests mediate God's message to the world, is the act of blessing. Just as the Levitical priests, and Jesus Himself, pronounced the blessing of God upon the people, and indeed the land and all creation, so may the royal priesthood pronounce the blessing of God upon their children and each other.[80] Within Anglicanism, ordained priests also have a formal role of pronouncing blessing upon parishioners in the context of one of the sacramental rites (penitential rite, holy unction, holy matrimony, etc.) or services of the church. Blessing, like absolution, does not confer upon another something that

79. The following selection constitutes a well-rounded library of books on preaching that covers the theology of preaching, the study of the text, attention to audience, the practice of sermon writing, and sermon delivery. One could spend a lifetime digesting and implementing just these six books, though there are many other excellent resources that cover both the fundamentals and special occasions and approaches to preaching. Mark Galli and Craig Brian Larson, *Preaching That Connects: Using Journalistic Techniques to Add Impact* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1994); Darrell W. Johnson, *The Glory of Preaching: Participating in God's Transformatio*n of the World (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2010); Haddon W. Robinson, *Biblical Preaching: The Development and Delivery of Expository Messages* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2001); James S. Stewart, *Heralds of God: A Practical Book on Preaching* (Vancouver, B.C.: Regent College, 2001); James S. Stewart, *A Faith to Proclaim* (Vancouver, B.C.: Regent College, 2002); John R. W. Stott, *Between Two Worlds: The Art of Preaching in the Twentieth Century* (Grand Rapids, MI: W.B. Eerdmans, 2000).

80. Blessing also bears some resemblance to the Adam's priestly act of naming. To bless someone is to name their identity in Christ, to name both their eschatological "in Christ" self and their particular unique self.

comes from within the priests themselves. It is a pronouncement whose power and efficacy derives from Jesus the great High Priest.

Priests are not only heralds, but also intercessors. Just as priests are steward God's Word, that its message be faithfully presented to the people, priests likewise are called to communicate the heart of the people to God faithfully in prayer. Like the Levitical priests who carried God's people upon their breasts—twelve stones in the ephod, into the presence of God—so do today's priests carry the people on their hearts before the throne of God. And like Jesus, who eternally lives to make intercession before the Father, the ordained priesthood intercedes for the people and the world. Our ministry is none other than the ministry of Jesus, to participate with him in what he is doing in the world as the great High Priest. Former Archbishop of Canterbury, The Rt. Rev. Michael Ramsey, writes in *The Christian Priest Today*, a wonderful little primer for priestly candidates,

> Now we can begin to see what is our own role as men of prayer, as priestly intercessors. We are called, near to Jesus and with Jesus and in Jesus, *to be with God with the people on our heart* [emphasis original]. That is what you will be promising when I say to you "will you be diligent in prayer?" … The heart is no isolated organ, but a part of a whole, many-sided life of worship and action. "Being with God with people on your heart" is the meaning of the Divine Office, of the Eucharist and of every part of your prayer and your service of the people.[81]

Priestly leaders of the church often neglect this essential part of their vocation for many reasons: they are too busy with the tyranny of the urgent; they feel as if they don't know how to pray; they are lazy or undisciplined in the habit of prayer.[82] Or perhaps they succumb to the seduction of human agency and the sense of power to get things done. Whatever the reason, and

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81. This is a collection of addresses to candidates soon before their ordination as priests. Michael Ramsey, *The Christian Priest Today* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2012), 141.

82. Anglicanism provides a schedule and school of prayer in the Daily Office of the Book of Common Prayer, which can help with both the discipline of prayer and learning how to pray. Many priests faithfully pray at least Morning and Evening Prayer every day.

wherever priests find themselves in their prayer life, "being with God with the people on their hearts" is central to the call of priesthood.[83]

Priests of the church are also charged with helping and leading the royal priesthood to pray. Anglicans do this through the daily office and weekend services of the church, through its liturgical approach to worship, through extensive use of the Psalter, and through the observance of the church calendar, especially during fast and feast days or entire seasons like Lent. Teaching the royal priesthood also to develop a personal devotional life of prayer is another way the ordained priests are given a mediatorial role, facing God on behalf of the people not only leading prayers on their behalf, but leading a chorus of all God's people in public and private prayer.

Bearing Witness

To bear witness is to let one's speech or actions reflect personal, first-hand knowledge. A witness brought to the stand in a courtroom is asked to speak truthfully about something they have seen, heard, or experienced. Though most often understood in terms of *verbal* witness, bearing witness may also refer to one's actions. A child's kind and self-assured actions, or way of being in the world, may bear witness to the loving and empowering home environment created by her parents. The grape "speaks" of the variety of rootstock and conditions of soil from which it emerged. Likewise, the words and actions of God's people bear witness to the God who is their Source. This representation of God to the world is one of the central ways we participate in the

83. The works of Eugene Peterson and Martin Thornton have been most influential in my own understanding of the role of prayer in the pastoral vocation. Eugene H. Peterson, *The Contemplative Pastor: Returning to the Art of Spiritual Direction* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 1996); Eugene H. Peterson, *Working the Angles: The Shape of Pastoral Integrity* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 2001). The works of Martin Thornton on Ascetical and Pastoral Theology, are some of the most insightful among Anglican authors on the subject in the past century. Martin Thornton, *Christian Proficiency* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock Publishers, 2010); Martin Thornton, *Pastoral Theology: A Reorientation* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2010); Martin Thornton, *English Spirituality: An Outline of Ascetical Theology According to the English Pastoral Tradition* (Eugene: Wipf & Stock Publishers, 2012); Martin Thorton, *Spiritual Direction* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock Publishers, 2012).

mission of God. Christopher Wright defines our mission in light of God's mission thus, "Fundamentally, our mission (if it is biblically informed and validated) means our committed participation as God's people, at God's invitation and command, in God's own vision within the history of God's world for the redemption of creation."[84] That the mission is God's, not ours, is vital. Timothy Tennent, a leading North American missiologist, also captures this in his simple definition of mission as "*God's* redemptive, historical initiative on behalf of His creation."[85]

Bearing Witness in the Garden

Adam and Eve, made in God's image, were charged with representing the Creator to the rest of his creation as priests in the garden-temple. This is what it meant to be an image-bearer. Sovereigns of the Ancient Near East would sometimes put an image of themselves in a temple in their distant lands, representing their rule and reign in that region. A vice-regent in western monarchies was someone who represented the king in a distant land. A regent acts on behalf of the King to govern in a manner consistent with the king, extending the king's rule and reign. This crucial role of Adam and Eve is definitional of what it means to be human, as evidenced by the first vocational commission of the Bible, often called the Cultural Mandate: "So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. And God blessed them. And God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and

84. Christopher J. H. Wright, *The Mission of God: Unlocking the Bible's Grand Narrative* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2008), 22-23.

85. Timothy C. Tennent, *Invitation to World Missions: a Trinitarian Missiology for the Twenty-First Century* (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel, 2010), 54, emphasis mine. Also, "bearing witness" and "mission" will be used interchangeably in this section.

subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth."[86]

Andrew Malone comments on the missional nature of this mandate:

> [Adam and Eve's] dominion entailed extending the order that defined the sacred dance of God's garden until it encompassed the whole earth…. [B]iblical and human histories witness this expansion of God's rule, from creation to new creation, from the garden to the ends of the earth. God's rule over a central sliver of sacred space, despite the threat of sin, is re-established in concentric radii as God—through priestly individuals and his priestly people—stakes ever wider claims.[87]

Though at this point in the creation story sin has not yet entered the world, and no redemption is therefore necessary, Adam and Eve may nevertheless bear witness to their Creator by fulfilling the divine image-bearing mandate. To act *faithfully* as God's commissioned and authorized representative is to bear witness to him. This is, in fact, consistent with the missional call upon God's people in the rest of Scripture, after the fall, as they are called to be "a light to the nations."[88] The people of God living in his ways, righteous and true, is one of the ways they bear witness to the world. Indeed Jesus commands, "Let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven."[89] Simply reflecting the image of God in our everyday lives, as Adam and Eve were mandated in the garden, is one of the ways we bear witness to his glory.

86. Genesis 1:27-28.

87. Malone, *God's Mediators*, 57.

88. Isaiah 42:6; Isaiah 49:6; Isaiah 52:10; Isaiah 60:3

89. Matthew 5:16.

Bearing Witness in the Levitical Priesthood

The key text revealing the missional implications of priesthood from the very beginning is found in Exodus 19, a hinge text between the story of the exodus from Egypt and the giving of the law.[90] Here, at the creation of the Levitical priesthood, we are told that just as these men will be priests to the nation of Israel, so will Israel one day be a nation of priests to the world, "Now therefore, if you will indeed obey my voice and keep my covenant, you shall be my treasured possession among all peoples, for all the earth is mine; and you shall be to me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation. These are the words that you shall speak to the people of Israel."[91] Israel's priests will communicate God's Word to his people and lead them in worship as a holy nation. So will the whole nation, in turn, do for the whole world, mediating as a kingdom of priests between God and all nations. Wright observes that just as the Levitical priests were to teach the law (a ministry of proclamation), handle the sacrifices (a ministry of reconciliation), and bless the people of Israel, so would Israel have a ministry of proclamation, reconciliation, and blessing to the whole world. [92] Israel's call to be a blessing to the nations stretches all the way back to Genesis 12, when he promises Abraham that "in you all the families of the earth will be blessed."[93] Biblical priesthood is the way it will be accomplished.

90. Nicholas Haydock, *The Theology of the Levitical Priesthood: Assisting Gods People in Their Mission to the Nations* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock Publishers, 2015), 7.

91. Exodus 19:5-6.

92. Nicholas Haydock defines the priestly act of blessing thus: "A blessing is fundamentally relational as it exposes and speaks of the relationship a person has with God; specifically it connotes a favorable relationship between God and the person blessed" (*The Theology of the Levitical Priesthood*, 7). Christopher J. H. Wright, *The Mission of God: Unlocking the Bibles Grand Narrative* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2008).

93. Genesis 12:3.

Jesus Bearing Witness as the Great High Priest

Jesus bears witness to the Father, as God makes himself known to the world most supremely through Jesus Christ. There can be no greater way to bear witness to the living God than to embody God. In the beginning was the Word and the Word became flesh, John the evangelist tells us. The author of Hebrews opens with an assurance that Jesus bears witness to the Father, declaring that God "has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world. He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power."[94] The author of this letter, who often refers to Jesus as the "great High Priest," then tells the reader, "After making purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high."[95] The purpose of this divine incarnation was to mediate, as the great high priest, between God and creation. Paul tells us that "in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself."[96] Jesus himself, standing as mediator and priest between God and creation, prays to his Father, "The glory that you have given me I have given to them, that they may be one even as we are one."[97] Jesus mediates the glory of God, bearing witness to humanity.

Bearing Witness in the Royal Priesthood

Just as the call of Israel was to be a nation of priests to the world, and Jesus the great High Priest fulfilled the hopes and vocation of Israel, now the church inherits the same commission. In Jesus' high priestly prayer of John 17, Jesus intercedes for this witness-bearing

94. Hebrews 1:2-3.

95. Hebrews 1:3.

96. 2 Corinthians 5:19.

97. John 17:22.

vocation of the church. He asks the Father that the church may be one just as Jesus and the Father are one, "*so that the world may believe* that you have sent me."[98]

The church is explicitly called the "royal priesthood" in 1 Peter 2:9, echoing the "kingdom of priests" language of Exodus 19:5-6. Here there is a clear charge to bear witness *as the royal priesthood*, one flowing necessarily from the other: "But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, *that you may proclaim* the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light." Here the call to bear witness, or "proclaim the excellencies" of God, is framed as the *telos* of being the royal priesthood.

The Apostle Paul also understands that his role as a missionary is to be a priest to the nations, representing God to the Gentiles and the Gentiles to God, in order to facilitate reconciliation between the two. When writing the church in Rome, he refers to himself as "a minister of Christ Jesus to the Gentiles in the priestly service of the gospel of God."[99] Paul is a priest, bearing witness to the good news of God for all nations. He goes yet further with the priestly understanding of his mission, informing the Romans that the purpose of his call is "so that the offering of the Gentiles may be acceptable, sanctified by the Holy Spirit."[100] This "offering" of the Gentiles is the language of oblation. Paul is making oblation of the Gentiles, offering them up to God that they might be acceptable and sanctified.[101]

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98. John 17:21b.

99. Romans 15:16a.

100. Romans 15:16b.

101. The Douay-Rheims translation, in fact, makes explicit the missional act of oblation in Romans 16b: "Sanctifying the gospel of God, that the oblation of the Gentiles may be made acceptable and sanctified in the Holy Ghost."

The whole royal priesthood is called into the same priestly role the Apostle Paul describes for himself, to bear witness of the good news of God to all people, that they might be acceptable and sanctified by the Spirit. Then as those to whom we bear witness repent and believe the good news, they too become part of the royal priesthood. This is, in essence, the priesthood of all believers, offering up ourselves as a living sacrifice, drawing all people and all nations into the sacrificial life, who in turn will also make oblation of people, places, things, and time for the praise of God's glory.

Bearing Witness in the Ordained Priesthood

The ordained minister's vocation is primarily to be a priest to the church, who is in turn a priest to the world. The ordained priest's application of the call to bear witness will therefore primarily be in *mobilizing* the royal priesthood to bear witness in the world. Clergy can lead and mobilize their parish through (1) a personal missional lifestyle; (2) leading the church into Christlike maturity; (3) missional education and formation in the church; and (4) creating pathways and structures that build bridges to those who are unchurched and/or suffering in our world.

The ordained priest's missional lifestyle

Clergy can lead others in mission by modeling it in their own lifestyle. One of the challenges of the ordained priesthood is the paucity of contact with the unchurched. Most jobs outside of full-time vocational ministry allow for regular relationship with nonbelievers, and the opportunity to know, love, pray for, and even verbally bear gospel witness to them. It is not impossible, however, for clergy to intentionally seek opportunities to live a lifestyle of bearing

witness to the unchurched. There are many daily opportunities and encounters with workers, neighbors, fellow gym members, fellow parents in youth sports, etc. Clergy can also intentionally choose to pursue their interests in the company of nonbelievers. If one is an avid reader, they might join a community book club; if an avid gardener, use the community garden; if a basketball player, join the city league instead of the church league. One might also choose loyalty to the same barber or stylist or mechanic in order to build relationship over time. Likewise, the clergy's participation in opportunities like parish mission trips, evangelistic events/efforts, and prayer meetings also demonstrate personal commitment to bearing witness.

The ordained priest and the brilliant parish

The mission of God to all nations is very apparent throughout the Old Testament, nowhere more clearly demonstrated than in Christopher Wright's *The Mission of God*, which traces the theme throughout the whole Bible.[102] He highlights how, for example, in Isaiah 60, the glory of God shining within his people attracts the nations to God. When the glory of the Lord shines upon his people, "Nations shall come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your rising."[103] Likewise, the beauty of God's holiness within his church will draw people to worship the living God, as evident in Jesus' words, "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven."[104]

102. This book is a stellar example of biblical theology, tracing one theme through the whole of Scripture, and provides an excellent resource in the preacher's library to consider how any given book/text of the Bible might have a missional theme to highlight.

103. Isaiah 60:3.

104. Matthew 5:16.

As the royal priesthood offers a glimpse of what it means to be holy and whole, she is the light of the world and salt of the earth.[105] The church being the church, reflecting the mercy, beauty, and goodness of God, bears witness to the world. As seen above in the priestly role concerning "God's Holiness and Ours," leading the parish to growth in godliness is part of the call of the ordained priest, here applied specifically with a missional purpose.

The ordained priest and missional formation of the parish

Clergy can also lead the parish through explicit teaching and formation in mission. This should come through preaching, first and foremost, highlighting the missionary heart of God throughout all of the Bible, using illustrations that highlight gospel proclamation and embodiment in contexts of suffering and gospel poverty, and making use of sermon series and/or church seasons of the calendar to highlight the call to bear witness. Where available, the Perspectives Course is an excellent introduction to cross-cultural mission, to which clergy can direct their parishioners.[106]

One way to teach that the royal priesthood bear witness to the world is by aligning our lives with three paradigmatic charges from God: the Cultural Mandate, the Great Commandment, and the Great Commission. In a sense, we are bearing witness in everything we do, every moment of the day. But it's also necessary to talk about mission as intentional gospel living with a particular view to our lost and broken world.

The Cultural Mandate provides a theological foundation for us to see our vocation, culture-making, creation care, and contribution to the common good as part of our mission: "So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he

105. Matthew 5:13-16.
106. See www.perspectives.org for more information on their curriculum, resources, and offerings.

created them. And God blessed them. And God said to them, 'Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth.'"[107] This is the starting place of vocation. We are a called people, responding to a Caller, in whose image we are made. Our calling is to become co-creators with God, making culture and caring for creation as royal representatives (regents). We make oblation of people, places, things, and time. This impacts our approach to our contexts, which include the arts, entrepreneurship and business, cultural diversity, higher education, government, families and homemaking, etc. As we "seek the shalom of the city" (or wherever we live), we bear witness to the source of shalom.

The Great Commandment establishes love of neighbor as part of our mission, not only our literal neighbors, but all peoples, including our enemies.[108] When asked, "Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law? Jesus replied: 'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: Love your neighbor as yourself.'"[109] Our mission always asks, "what is the best way to love this person, this neighborhood, this nation?" Our baked goods for a new neighbor, our love of stranger, and our congressional law-making are all ways we love God and neighbor, and they all bear witness to Jesus. Our pursuit of justice and mercy, the "good works" of our faith, fit well under this charge.

The Great Commission is the text most frequently associated with the church's mission: "Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of

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107. Genesis 1:27-28.

108. The central message of the parable of the Good Samaritan is to identify the despised Samaritans as an example of the neighbors whom Jesus' listeners were commanded to love.

109. Matthew 22:36-39.

the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."[110] While this charge is broader than evangelism, there is an emphasis here on leading people from non-disciple to disciple of Jesus, baptizing new believers, and doing so among all *ethne*/nations. Together, these three paradigmatic texts provide solid fare for clergy to prepare a steady diet of missional education and formation.

The ordained priest and missional systems/structures of the parish

Sometimes overlooked in the ministry of the ordained priest is the way in which they provide leadership through systems and structures. Concerning the call to lead the royal priesthood in bearing witness, this might mean considering outward facing events or courses such as Alpha, the massively effective evangelistic course developed by Holy Trinity Brompton in London, England. It might mean promoting public lectures or apologetics events, or simply thinking strategically about services like Christmas and Easter that often have many nominal or nonbelievers present. On such occasions the clergy might consider a special mailing or social media strategy to invite the community. The clergy might also consider a more "seeker-friendly" message than usual, and ways to invite a next step.

Other systemic/structural considerations might include heavy investment in building a culture and team for hospitality and welcome. Small group ministries might consider "open groups" that can be joined at any point, and to which members are encouraged to invite friends. Even such details as a clear and informative website and guest parking signal an orientation to

110. Matthew 28:19-20.

the "outsider." The ordained priesthood can facilitate the royal priesthood's gospel witness by the way they build a missional culture and give strategic and structural leadership to the parish.

Oblation as Controlling Metaphor

Though I have presented a priestly quadrilateral in which "Making Oblation" is the first of four priestly roles, I originally considered framing all four as *forms* of oblation, elevating oblation to the conceptual frame within which all other priestly actions are understood. In the interest of biblical and pedagogical clarity, I choose not to do so, but the power of the imagery of oblation for the whole of priestly ministry merits comment.[111] One might speak of the whole Christian life as an act of oblation, with the role of ordained priesthood being to lead the royal priesthood into a life of oblation.

The Christian life framed as making oblation would be understood thus: (1) followers of Jesus make oblation of all people, places, things, and time. That is, they offer all creation up to God through attentive wonderment and gratitude. And in so doing, that which is offered up reaches its *telos*, its most divine and glorious creational intent. This is the foundation of a theology of ordinary daily life; (2) followers of Jesus make oblation of themselves, body and soul, as a living sacrifice. In so doing, they live the oblate life, a life wholly offered up to God for his glory; (3) followers of Jesus offer up, as incense, the needs and hopes of those near and far, the cries and aches of the whole world. In doing so, they live a prayerful life, making oblation of all creation's groaning; (4) followers of Jesus make oblation of all nations, those far from God

111. Biblically speaking, it might stretch the image of priesthood too far to make it this comprehensive, though the argument could be made that it is preeminent among the offices of the *triplex munus*—prophet, priest, and king. Priesthood is the most robust and expansive of the three, including the prophet's call to communicate God's Word and the royal charge of the cultural mandate. To frame the Christian life, and the ordained life, in terms of oblation puts the emphasis more on one side of the mediatorial life. The priestly life faces both directions, toward God and creation, representing one to the other. The framing of the priestly life in terms of oblation emphasizes the God-facing role of priesthood, offering up to him his creation in all its creational and intended glory.

and those who are vulnerable. In doing so, they "lift up" the lost and hurting to their Creator and Lord, in attentive wonderment and gratitude for the uniqueness of every individual and culture, on the one hand, and for the unique splendor, power, and grace of the Triune God, on the other. The priestly quadrilateral, steeped in a sacramental vision of the world, might be summarized as the oblate life.

It is also possible to reframe the ordained priesthood in terms of oblation. All that the royal priesthood offers up in oblation, so does the ordained priesthood. But additionally, the ordained priesthood make oblation *of the congregation*. Clergy conceive of their calling as offering up the people of God in wonderment and gratitude, to become and fulfill the full creational *telos* they are intended to be and become. This oblational framework of what it means to be human captures the fact that "in sum, a priest is what a human person ought to be."[112]

112. Leland Ryken, James C. Wilhoit, and Tremper Longman III, eds., *Dictionary of Biblical Imagery* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2010), s.v. "priest."

CHAPTER FOUR

PROJECT DESIGN

With the theological framework of the project established, and having engaged relevant literary sources, we return now to the problem that prompted this study, and how PriestCraft proposes to address it. The problem is that the Anglican Church of North America, as a young and growing movement, has attracted many aspiring or experienced clergy from non-denominational or other denominational settings that do not form in their ministers a sacramental and priestly vision for their calling. Additionally, where some might have been formed with a theological vision of priesthood, the full scope of the biblical imagery has not always been studied and applied. This is a liability, because it can lead to a diminished understanding of the church's calling to be a royal priesthood, a loss of some of the distinctive historic gifts of the sacramental and priestly tradition of the Anglican Communion—unique within Protestantism—and a loss of missional opportunity for the church to be a kingdom of priests to the world.

The design of this project is intended to address this situation by gathering a cohort of priests-in-formation who are within one year of their ordination (soon-to-be or recently ordained). These participants, over the course of one academic year together, will gain a theological vision of both the royal and ordained priesthoods, and practical ideas for incorporating this vision of priesthood into their ministry.

PriestCraft cohort participants have already received formal theological education, to which PriestCraft serves as a complement. PriestCraft best falls into the category of non-formal theological education and formation. Philip Coombs, et. al., define non-formal education as "any organized, systematic, educational activity carried on outside the framework of the formal

system to provide selected types of learning to particular subgroups in the population, adults as well as children."[1] PriestCraft is designed as an organized, systematic, formational activity outside formal theological education to provide a select type of learning for new priests of the Anglican Church of North America. Before an overview of the technical aspects of the curricular design, an overview of some overarching design principles is necessary.

PriestCraft Design Principles

The design of a learning context and process is arguably as important as the content. This is captured in the colloquial distinction between what is "caught" and what is "taught," the former often making the more lasting impression on the student or participant. Along similar lines, Marshall McLuhan coined the useful phrase "the medium is the message" in his book *Understanding Media*.[2] For any given message or truth, a delivery channel must be selected. The choice of a particular method or tool or context—the medium, in other words—should not be overlooked, nor its power underestimated. PriestCraft is designed as (1) a community with embodied presence, (2) making use as necessary of communication technologies, (3) with the guidance of an experienced practitioner. These three key components of the project design are grounded in a trinitarian and incarnational theology.

The project design principles themselves reflect a biblical theology of priesthood. As we have seen, mediation of presence is central to biblical priesthood. How ironic it would be to train and ordain priests who facilitate the presence of God among his people, using a method that lets

1. Philip H. Coombs, Manzoor Ahmed, and Barbara B. Israel, *Attacking Rural Poverty: How Nonformal Education Can Help* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1978), in Alan Rogers, "Looking Again at Non-formal and Informal Education – towards a New Paradigm," Infed.org, April 04, 2013, accessed July 12, 2019, http://infed.org/mobi/looking-again-at-non-formal-and-informal-education-towards-a-new-paradigm/.

2. Marshall McLuhan, *Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1964).

technology call all the shots, without embodied presence to each other. PriestCraft, therefore, prepares ordained priests to do their ecclesial work in relationally incarnate ways, while conducting the preparatory formational process itself in a like manner.

An Incarnational Learning Community

Trinitarian theology is one of the most fruitful theological fields of the 20th century, still thriving into the 21st century. It is nothing new, of course, nascent already in Holy Scripture itself, articulated more clearly by the Cappadocian Fathers and the Creeds, attention ebbing and flowing through the centuries since.[3] Protestant theologians, however, have until recently tended not to place much emphasis on Trinitarian theology, except to clearly affirm the deity of all three persons of the Trinity, while maintaining monotheistic conviction. Protestant theologians have also given some attention to what is often called the economic Trinity, that is, the functional roles within the Trinity such as creation, salvation, and sanctification.

In the past century, however, Protestant theologians have begun to pay more attention to the immanent Trinity, the inner life of the Trinity, including the social relations between God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and the implications for, among other things, theological anthropology.[4] This is how the Trinity was originally discussed among the church fathers as they

3. Stanley J. Grenz, *Created for Community: Connecting Christian Belief with Christian Living* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1998), 44.

4. The following works represent a broad representation of important contributions to the 20th-century revival of Protestant Trinitarian theology. Karl Barth, *Church Dogmatics* (London: T & T Clark, 2009). Stanley J. Grenz, *Theology for the Community of God* (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1994). Colin Gunton, *The Promise of Trinitarian Theology* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2006). Thomas F. Torrance, *The Trinitarian Faith: The Evangelical Theology of the Ancient Catholic Church* (London: Bloomsbury T & T Clark, 2016). For discussion of the limits of social Trinitarianism, see Matthew Barrett, *Simply Trinity: The Unmanipulated Father, Son, and Spirit* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2021).

tried to understand the godhead within itself.[5] Thinking about God must be relational; not simply propositional. God is personal within himself, and he reveals himself personally, as the whole of Scripture can be read as God's efforts to dwell among his people, from the garden to the new heavens and the new earth. When the things of God become depersonalized, we know that something is not right. We cannot know God *impersonally* because he reveals himself as *person*.

In dealing with the person and work of God it is not enough to teach abstract truth correctly. We must also interact relationally, responding to the truth personally. If we merely assent to truth in our heads, we are not responding to truth in a Trinitarian way, in the form it was given to us. The Trinity protects us from abstraction and depersonalization, from ideas that are not incarnate and embedded in life. The Trinity assures us we are always working in particulars, demonstrated in what is sometimes called the "scandal of particularity," that God's plan of salvation for the world was to become incarnate in the body of one man, during one moment of history, in one tiny corner of the earth, within a specific socio-political and cultural matrix, leaving the rest of human history an account of this story in a particular language. Though his rule and redemption are cosmic, God values particularity; every follower of Jesus, indeed every human, is unique.

While God dwelt among his people in the garden, Tabernacle, and Temple, he most supremely dwelt among us in the flesh, in the second person of the Trinity, Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus revealed the Father in the context of everyday embodied life and relationships, and through his bodily death, resurrection, and ascension. The community of the Triune God and Jesus' incarnated presence within creation therefore provide the optimal theological framework for how

5. This section draws heavily from class notes in a course I took at Regent College. Eugene Peterson, "Biblical Spirituality," Lecture, Regent College, Vancouver, BC, January 1998.

to seek the formation of persons. Thus, body-souls-in-community are the primary context of PriestCraft.[6]

Grounds for the Use of New Technologies

While we made use of video-conferencing technology between physical gatherings, our in-person presence to each other was the foundational context of formation. Though not preferred to embodied relational connection, digital togetherness can be necessary and useful to overcome the constraints of distance between participants. The choice to integrate these technologies into the project design was driven by considerations of stewardship of time and money. Given the high cost of time and money required for monthly travel, room, and board, videoconferencing made participation more accessible and provided an acceptable medium as a secondary context for our learning community. The internet is one of many cultural artifacts, or tools, that have been utilized from the early church to the present day, in order to further the gospel, from Paul's use of the vast network of Roman roads during the Pax Romana, to the use of Greek as a *lingua franca* of his Mediterranean world, to Luther and the printing press, and Billy Graham on radio and television. Each of these tools and mediums have pros and cons, requiring careful discernment in their application to mission and ministry.

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6 This phrasing is adapted from John Stott, quoted by Steve Garber in his foreword to Stott's booklet *Mission: Rethinking Vocation* (Vancouver: Regent College Publishing, 2019), 3. "Because we are a 'body-soul-in community,' and not only a 'soul,' Stott maintains that the mission of Christ addresses the complexity of the human condition, with its rich anthropological vision, all of life addressed by all of the gospel."

The project design included an opening retreat, a mid-term retreat, and a final gathering of people who traveled to be together from different parts of the United States.

The Guidance of an Experienced Practitioner

PriestCraft could have been designed simply as a workbook for individual completion, or as a group process with an untrained facilitator, but instead was designed to be led by an experienced practitioner. Participants were just recently, or soon to be, ordained as Anglican priests. The cohort leader, by design, was a priest with fifteen years of parish ministry experience. This model of learning, while not the only valid approach to formation, is biblical, time-tested, and optimal for the kind of vocational formation taking place in PriestCraft, not to mention the participant observation method of research.

We see notable examples of formation for ministry taking place between experienced practitioners and learners in Scripture. The stories of Israel, Jesus, and the church all demonstrate the value of learning alongside experienced practitioners.[7]

Eli was a priest at Shiloh when Hannah brought her newly weaned son, Samuel, to be raised in Eli's home, having "lent him to the Lord. As long as he lives, he is lent to the Lord."[8] We hear of Samuel "lying down in the temple of the Lord, where the ark of God was."[9] As Samuel grows up, we later learn that "the young man Samuel was ministering to the Lord under Eli," who at one point, like a priest, coaches Samuel in how to pray, listen to, and discern the voice of God: "Eli said to Samuel, 'Go lie down, and if he calls you, you shall say, 'Speak, Lord, for your servant hears.'"[10]

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7. The following three resources reflect theologically and practically on the value of learning alongside experienced practitioners: Carson Pue, *Mentoring Leaders: Wisdom for Developing Character, Calling, and Competency* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2005); Brian Williams, *The Potter's Rib: Mentoring for Pastoral Formation* (Vancouver, BC: Regent College Publishing, 2005); Walter C. Wright, *Mentoring: The Promise of Relational Leadership* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2013).

8. 1 Samuel 1:28.

9. 1 Samuel 3:3.

10. 1 Samuel 3:1, 9.

Jesus and his disciples are the most obvious example of a learning cohort, based on incarnational relationship, led by an experienced practitioner. He not only taught them explicitly, but also modeled ministry, and then sent them out to do it themselves, followed by a debriefing conversation.[11] Jesus pays close mentoring attention especially to three of these disciples: Peter, James, and John. Jesus tells Peter that he will build his church upon Peter, and John receives the special designation of "beloved disciple." Jesus calls individuals, shares life and ministry with them, teaches and trains them, calls them friends, and authorizes and commissions them to carry on his ministry.

As the early church began to grow and new leaders emerged to be formed and sent, we see the apostle Paul using this same methodology. Timothy is perhaps the best example, with whom Paul travels and partners in ministry as his mentor, and whom Paul charges to "be strengthened by the grace that is in Christ Jesus, and what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men who will be able to teach others also."[12] One of the places where Paul and Timothy both served was Thessalonica, where Timothy would have witnessed the more experienced practices of Paul in an incarnational and relational context. Timothy shared with Paul in this type of ministry, as we see in 1 Thessalonians, a letter written principally by Paul, but that includes Timothy in the first person plural of the opening chapters.[13] "So, being affectionately desirous of you, *we* [both Paul and Timothy, emphasis mine] were

11. See Jesus' exchange with the twelve after a ministry assignment in Luke 9, and the seventy-two after they return from a ministry assignment in Luke 10, for example.

12. 2 Timothy 2:2.

13. "Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy, to the church of the Thessalonians" (1 Thessalonians 1:1).

ready to share with you not only the gospel of God but also of our own selves, because you had become very dear to us."[14]

PriestCraft Project Design

This project involves three elements of implementation and inquiry, utilizing primarily participant observation and evaluative research methods. The first element of implementation and inquiry is the design of the PriestCraft formation process. The design of the process has the end in view from the beginning: shaping aspiring and new Anglican presbyters with a theological vision of their vocation as priests among a kingdom of priests. The pedagogical and formational approach combines (1) three in-person gatherings of the cohort with (2) a combination of individual exercises and (3) both synchronous and asynchronous digital engagement with each other.

The second element of implementation and inquiry will be to engage the cohort with the curriculum, its practices, and each other. This is the heart of the project. Having designed the process, the cohort now learns and grows together, as the experienced practitioner/researcher observes the participants and the dynamics of change and development.

The final element of the research process will be the evaluation of the formational influence this learning experience had upon participants. Though the researcher will have been observing and evaluating throughout the process, a retrospective view will afford greater clarity and the "big picture." Participants will also be asked to provide feedback in a Summative Evaluation, which will complement the researcher's observations. Among the outcomes intended by this project are (1) a re-imagination of priestly identity, both as disciples and ordained

14. 1 Thessalonians 2:8.

ministers, with (2) a broader scope of understanding and articulation of the human vocation according to the priestly quadrilateral, (3) an increased sense of awe and humility at the call to be priestly servants within a kingdom of priests, (4) a new resonance in our reading of the biblical story, (5) a priestly life and ministry that is more consonant with the theological depth of priestly imagery in the Bible, and (6) vocational clarity as ones who make vows and enter holy orders as priests within the ACNA.

Participants engaged in two retreats and a final gathering, with interactive reading, reflections, activities, and conversations in between. These research questions will be explored with evaluative research methods, conducting both summative evaluation to see if the process yields the desired results, and formative evaluation to learn how to improve the effectiveness of the curriculum and cohort design for future participants.

As ordained clergy consider the different dimensions of the self in which one hopes to be formed and transformed, it's hard to improve upon the familiar symbols of head, heart, and hands. The head represents an emphasis on intellectual formation, the heart on spiritual formation, and the hands on habitual/practical formation.[15] The formational design of this cohort attempts to blend all three, with only somewhat more emphasis on the head and heart than on the hands (every major theme covered will include exercises/practices to be completed).

15. I use the phrase "spiritual formation" here as a technical term that has found currency in the late twentieth and early twenty-first century to refer to the Spirit-empowered transformation of Christians to more fully reflect the image of God, for the sake of others. To be sure, these categories are overlapping and somewhat artificial in a holistic view of the self. Spiritual formation indeed involves both our thinking and actions, but even imperfect categories are needed for clear communication and apprehension.

The Participants

PriestCraft participants were recruited from within the Diocese of Churches for the Sake of Others, led by Bishop Todd Hunter, at a time when the author served as a Dean (Texas Deanery) within the Diocese. Through diocesan communication channels, candidates were invited to apply for a spot in the cohort and told, "The goal is not simply to know more, but to be shaped by learning with peers to practice our priesthood within the Anglican tradition, for the sake of others. The process will last six months, consisting of two retreats and a final gathering, with both individual and interactive engagement between gatherings."

A total of six participants committed to the cohort, three of whom were soon to be ordained priests and three of whom were recently ordained. Five of the participants were male, and one female. Two were church planters, two were associates on larger church staffs, one was a hospital chaplain, and one was a non-profit director with responsibilities in a local parish. These six participants came from Colorado, Texas, Kentucky, and Tennessee, all serving in urban or suburban contexts.

In addition to personal details, candidates were asked to submit written responses to the following questions:

(1) What draws you to Anglicanism?

(2) Describe your ecclesial background.

(3) How do you hope the Lord will shape you through this process?

Responses to these questions assisted in assessing the suitability of the candidate for the project, providing some insight into the degree to which they fit the hypothesis that many new clergy in the ACNA need a more robust sacramental and priestly vision for their ministry. In fact, not one of the candidates had been reared or come to faith in an Anglican context. Only one

had received a theological education that provided substantive sacramental and priestly theological perspective.

Three Learning Environments

PriestCraft utilized three distinct learning environments. First, we gathered for in-person sessions in a retreat setting; second, we interacted live with each other through video-conferencing technologies; third, individuals self-scheduled to complete formational tasks and assignments.

The retreat settings anchored the entire project. Because the project design depended upon a theology of formation that necessitates an incarnational learning community with an experienced practitioner, PriestCraft required some time to be physically present to each other. Retreats were held in a rural, quiet setting where all lived under one roof, shared meals, went for walks, talked late into the night, and gathered for the four hours of prayer.[16] Such a setting was an intentional part of the formational process. In contrast to a clinical boardroom, classroom, or even church education space, where everyone gathers for "class," then drives "home" to their own hotels or accommodations, the communal retreat setting was a powerful part of the curriculum.

The retreat setting provided: (1) detachment from the rest of our lives, technologies, and rhythms, and the opportunity to focus intensely on each other and our priestly formation; (2) ample and generous time to converse, formally and informally; (3) the sharing of everyday tasks, such as meals and clean-up, and the relationships that form in such circumstances; (4) the opportunity to observe the hours in prayer, without pressure to use every minute (as in a

16. "The Hours," in Anglicanism, refers to the daily rhythm of prayer found in the Book of Common Prayer, including Morning Prayer, Noonday Prayer, Evening Prayer, and Compline.

classroom setting) for explicitly pedagogical purposes; (5) engagement with creation and our Creator, as we held many of our sessions outdoors surrounded by large trees, a big sky, a small lake, the changing light of the day, fire, and wildlife like a bald eagle resting atop the crown of a massive oak. We were thus able to make oblation, in our setting, of people, places, things, and time. We embodied and enacted our priesthood, even in the retreat itself.

The second learning environment was live online videoconferencing.[17] Known in pedagogical terms as synchronous learning, this allowed participants to simultaneously engage each other in conversation, in real time, through the use of digital technologies. The six participants were divided into two groups, three who were recently ordained as priests, and three who were soon-to-be ordained. The author served as facilitator, the "experienced practitioner," as these two groups monthly discussed assignments and the priestly life.

The third learning environment was the completion of individual tasks and assignments. In pedagogical terms, this is known as asynchronous learning, wherein all participants are required to do the same assignment, but not simultaneously or in each other's presence. Participants were permitted to complete these assignments on their own time, at their convenience, by a predetermined deadline.

The combination of these three environments—retreats, synchronous online videoconferencing, and asynchronous completion of assignments—accommodates a variety of learning styles, allowing the more introverted to do some work in solitude at their own pace, the more extroverted to process their learning verbally, and for all to learn from the collective wisdom as everyone shared personal insights in the company of all.

17. There are several available platforms for such purposes. We used "Zoom."

The Schedule

The total timeline of PriestCraft fit within the academic year. Participants went through the application process in August and were accepted into the cohort and notified of preliminary assignments in September 2017. The first retreat was held in late October 2017, with monthly assignments and videoconferencing through April 2018. The second retreat was held in late February 2018. Though participants spent more hours reading, viewing, listening to, or practicing the assignments *outside* the retreat time, the author's impression was that the two retreats themselves were the pillars of the project, the most formational and memorable learning experiences. The final projects were completed in March 2018.

The Modules

The curriculum was organized into four modules, with each module corresponding to one part of the priestly quadrilateral. Retreat #1 (October 2017) was entirely focused on introductory matters and Module One: "Making Oblation." The first two videoconference meetings (November and December 2017) and assignments following that retreat completed the "Making Oblation" module and introduced Module Two: "God's Holiness and Ours," and its assignments. The subsequent online meeting (January 2018) discussed "God's Holiness and Ours," which was then completed in the first half of Retreat #2 (February 2018). The second half of Retreat #2 was devoted to Module Three: "God's Word and Ours," with the subsequent meeting (March 2018) bringing that module to a conclusion and introducing assignments for Module Four: "Bearing Witness." The final gathering, to discuss Module Four and conclude PriestCraft, was scheduled to be a half-day gathering in the context of the Diocese of Churches for the Sake of Others' annual Clergy Conference. This final PriestCraft gathering did not occur, however, due to a

tragic event that prevented the researcher's attendance.[18] A final videoconference, after the crisis subsided, brought closure to the cohorts' formational process and time together as a community.

Activities and Assignments

This section provides an overview of the activities and assignments, each designed to contribute to the participants' formation as an ordained ACNA priest who, by participation in the priesthood of Jesus, makes oblation, facilitates encounter between the holy God and his people, mediates God's Word and ours, bears witness to the living God before the world, and leads the royal priesthood to do the same in their everyday arenas of life and vocation. Rather than itemizing here each exercise according to detailed chronology, they are presented in groups according to the priestly quadrilateral: Making Oblation, God's Holiness and Ours, God's Word and Ours, Bearing Witness.

Introductory Assignments

Once the cohort was formed participants were asked to complete three assignments prior to our first retreat. While the retreat would be the first physical gathering, these pre-retreat assignments were designed to accelerate the process of building community, on the one hand, and early engagement with the material, on the other.

Pre-Retreat Assignment A

The purpose of Assignment A was to provide orientation and begin building community. Each part of Assignment A had a deadline.

18. During the week prior to the final PriestCraft gathering, the researcher's wife was in a near-fatal accident and hospitalized for five weeks.

Part One: Participants watched a pre-recorded twenty-minute video by the project leader, welcoming the participants, providing some personal background, and an overview of the PriestCraft formation process. The video was posted on Vimeo as a private video, to which participants had access, and where they were encouraged to utilize the comment section to share any reactions they might have, personally or practically.

Part Two: Participants recorded and uploaded their own five-minute video introduction of themselves so that everyone could begin getting to know each other's basic personal and vocational background. They were encouraged to make it as simple or as creative as they liked, and to consider shooting the video in a room or place at home, work, or in the community that is meaningful to them. They were also invited to include any family members if they wanted, wear anything that tells us something about them (such as sports team merchandise), tell us something about their interests, and share something that makes them feel joy, contentment, or peace.

Part Three: Participants were then asked to watch each other's videos and comment on each other's videos, interact with each other, or post a follow-up question for one of their peers.

Pre-Retreat Assignment B

The purpose of Assignment B was to take a first step into the content of PriestCraft with a Christological framing of the topic.

Participants listened to three lectures by Dr. Ross Hastings, Professor of Theology at Regent College, entitled "The Priest and the Priests." In these lectures he teaches from the Book of Hebrews on Jesus as the once-for-all great High Priest, and the implications of Jesus' priesthood for all God's people as the royal priesthood. These lectures were available from RegentAudio.com, a large audio archive of past courses and lectures available to the public.

Two brief written responses were required in our Facebook Group created for PriestCraft participants. First, as they listened to these lectures, they wrote up to five thought-provoking points, ideas, comments, or questions. Second, they were asked to summarize a two-minute key section of the lectures, using their own words.

Pre-Retreat Assignment C

The purpose of Assignment C was likewise designed to make entry to the content of PriestCraft, specifically preparing for the first Module of the Priestly Quadrilateral: Making Oblation.

Participants listened to a lecture by Eugene Peterson entitled, "Novels, Pastors, and Poets" to provide a paradigm for the work of oblation. As novelists and poets pay attention to and make an offering of the concrete particulars of people, places, moments, and things, so do priests. They were asked to share in the Facebook Group a response to this question: "What does it mean for the work of the priest to think of priestly ministry in terms of the work of the novelist and poet?"

Module One: Making Oblation

To make oblation is to offer persons, places, things or time up to God, saying "this came from you, has inherent worth and beauty which I have beheld and honored, and now lift back to you. Great are the works of your hands." Facing creation, we hold its glories and sufferings; facing God, we give voice to creation's praise and laments, with particularity and love.

Completion of the following exercises spanned the first retreat and two monthly videoconference meetings. This module, Making Oblation, had the most extensive exercises and interaction of the four modules of the priestly quadrilateral.

Oblation as the Art of Encounter

The Onion Exercise: During the first retreat participants were directed in an "Onion Exercise," inspired by a chapter of *The Supper of the Lamb*, by Robert Farrar Capon.[19] Each participant was given an onion, a cutting board, and a knife. They were instructed to have a "session" with the onion in which, for one hour, they used all their senses to get to know the onion as thoroughly as possible and share their discoveries with each other. What happens when the first dry layer is removed and held to the light, revealing intricate patterns and subtly different shades of color? What is the feel of the knife slicing through the middle, the smell of its opening, the color of the interior, or the design of the layers revealed in the cross-section? Through this exercise, one of the world's most common and inexpensive foods, became a thing of wonder. The exercise showed that a session with an onion not only becomes a moment of intrinsic value as it yields wonder, beauty, delight, and perhaps even prompting praise; this encounter also has potential to shed new light on how we perceive the vocation of farming, from landowner to harvester and even extending to the culinary arts.

Vocation as Oblation of Work and Culture

The Workplace Blessing: Each participant was provided a sample of a business blessing written and conducted by the Rev. Clifton Warner in Austin, Texas. Discussion included reasons

19. Robert Farrar Capon, *The Supper of the Lamb: A Culinary Reflection* (New York: Modern Library, 2002).

for doing such a blessing, how to do the blessing, the use of form/liturgy, and the writing of situation-specific prayers. Participants were then instructed to contact a business owner about doing a business blessing for them, schedule the blessing, write and conduct the blessing, share the document with the rest of the group, and then give a verbal report to each other at the next videoconference meeting. The blessings were to include three simple prayers (similar to a Collect) for the specific place of work, the people involved (from workers to consumers), and the contribution the product/service will make to the common good. See Appendix for a sample business blessing.

Pastoral Care as Oblation

The Eugene Peterson Lecture: As mentioned above, one of the pre-retreat assignments was to listen to a lecture by Eugene Peterson entitled "Novels, Pastors and Poets."[20] At the first retreat, participants were led in a discussion of observations and implications of the lecture. Novelists pay attention to setting, context, place, themes, text and subtext, and the story of people's lives. Poets pay attention to words, meaning, and mystery. Pastors, in their cure of souls, do all of the above as well.

Books Assignment/Discussion: *The Christian Priest Today* by Archbishop Michael Ramsey was assigned, with the following quote as one particular selection for extended discussion at the retreat, as it applies to pastoral care. This quote highlights the call to make oblation of the "small things," the particular, concrete, and specific situations of pastoral attention:

> Amidst the vast scene of the world's problems and tragedies you may feel that your own ministry seems so small, so insignificant, so concerned with the trivial. What a tiny

20. Eugene Peterson, "Novels, Pastors and Poets," RegentAudio, 1992, accessed June 11, 2021, https://www.regentaudio.com/products/novels-pastors-and-poets?_pos=1&_sid=7b411a3e6&_ss=r.

> difference it can make to the world that you should run a youth club, or preach to a few people in a church, or visit families with seemingly small result. But consider: the glory of Christianity is its claim that small things really matter and that the small company, the very few, the one man, the one woman, the one child are of infinite worth to God. Let that be your inspiration. Consider our Lord himself. Amidst a vast world with its vast empires and vast events and tragedies our Lord devoted himself to a small country, to small things and to individual men and women, often giving hours of time to the very few or to the one man or woman. In a country where there were movements and causes which excited the allegiance of many—the Pharisees, the Zealots, the Essenes, and others—our Lord gives many hours to one woman of Samaria, one Nicodemus, one Martha, one Mary, one Lazarus, one Simon Peter, for the infinite worth of the one is the key to the Christian understanding of the many.
>
> It is to a ministry like that of our Lord himself that you are called. The Gospel you preach affects the salvation of the world, and you may help your people to influence the world's problems. But you will never be nearer to Christ that in caring for the one man, the one woman, the one child. His authority will be given to you as you do this, and his joy will be yours as well.[21]

The Priestly Lament Video and Discussion: Participants watched a corporate service of lament, recorded live at Christ Church in Austin, Texas, as part of the Matthew 25 Gathering 2016.[22] In this service, practitioners in ministries among the vulnerable and marginalized wrote down the things that weigh heavy upon their heart—whether personal, vocational, or cultural—and placed the pieces of paper into a baptismal font on the Lord's Table. A priest (the researcher and project leader of PriestCraft) then held the bowl and offered them up on behalf of God's people. The PriestCraft participants discussed this embodied priestly act as pastoral care, a priest making oblation of the cares and concerns of others.

Sacramental Rites as Oblation of People, Place, Things, and Time

Discussion of Sacramental Rites: Participants were led through the ways that the various sacramental rites function as an act of oblation. Some of them incorporate materiality, the use of

21. Michael Ramsey, *The Christian Priest Today* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2012), 42.

22. "Corporate & Individual Response – Lament," YouTube, May 22, 2020, accessed June 11, 2021, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fKBLIfMZwAQ.

created things such as water, oil, bread, wine, or a stole. Some of them are explicitly connected to the human body, such as holy unction for physical healing, or marriage as the context for physical union. This discussion also touched upon the concept of sacred space. Participants were given instruction (and a printed guide) on how to do a house blessing with oil, holy water, and a handheld cross.

Holy Eucharist Exercise: The act of oblation that theologically ties everything together is Holy Eucharist. Participants were instructed to have a conversation with their priest or bishop about Holy Eucharist and discuss with them, for example: what is most meaningful about their weekly experience celebrating the Eucharist; do they have a favorite part of the Eucharistic liturgy and why; how does the Eucharist draw them into deeper personal connection with the Lord, and; do they have a particular memory of leading Holy Eucharist that has been poignant/significant? They were then required to write a 300-500-word report on that conversation and post it to the group.

Sabbath as Oblation of Time

Susan Philips Lecture: Participants listened to a lecture entitled, "Stop in the Name of Love: the radical practice of sabbath keeping" by Susan Phillips, Spiritual Director and Executive Director of the New College Berkely.[23] Participants posted online to the group three things that stood out to them from this lecture.

Reflection Exercise on Sabbath: Participants completed an exercise on Sabbath created by Leadership Transformations as part of their "Silencio" series of exercises. They chose one of

23. Susan S. Phillips, "Stop in the Name of Love: The Radical Practice of Sabbath-Keeping," RegentAudio, May 25, 2011, accessed June 11, 2021, https://www.regentaudio.com/products/stop-in-the-name-of-love-the-radical-practice-of-sabbath-keeping?_pos=1&_sid=b912797e8&_ss=r.

the listed spiritual practices, posted online with the group about their experience, and wrote a 200-300-word response to a reflection question of their choice.

Sabbath-keeping Exercise: Participants were provided with the researcher's personal sample of a family sabbath, the guiding principles, schedule, and ideas for rest and play. Participants then planned their own 18-hour Sabbath with friends or family. After the Sabbath they then posted online several highlights about the experience, plus one thing that was most challenging about the experience.

Oblation as Evangelistic Bridge and Foundation for Neighborhood Outreach

Come to the Table: Participants were given a case study of a parish-based evangelistic outreach called Come to the Table, as an example of how appreciation for cultural products can be a bridge for spiritual conversations between churched and unchurched people. In this case, the event is a private event at a restaurant, with a delicious multi-course meal. Church members invite unchurched friends and family. After the meal, a priest from the church (in this case, the PriestCraft researcher) gives a talk on how the world of food—from farm to table to body—provokes questions of justice, beauty, and community. Not only does the Christian faith have much to say about these themes, but Jesus himself spent much of his time in table fellowship, and asked his friends to remember him with a meal. PriestCraft participants were provided a handout with an overview of the talk (see Appendix A).

Love Where We Live: Participants were given a case study of a parish-based initiative to disciple its parishioners in making oblation of place. The initiative was called Love Where We Live, an effort to help parishioners see themselves as having two neighborhoods they were called to love, their own residential neighborhood, and the neighborhood of their church property.

Participants discussed how loving where we live is an act of making oblation of people, place, things and time; it involves love of people, parks, businesses and institutions, history, and even care for physical things like buildings, art, playgrounds, trees, and infrastructure.[24]

Participants were also provided with a short unpublished article, written by the researcher, entitled "Sacramental Spirituality" (see Appendix A) that summarizes the life of oblation. An optional additional assignment on Making Oblation was to read *An Offering of Uncles* by Robert Farrar Capon.[25]

Module Two: God's Holiness and Ours

God desires to dwell in the presence of his people and be their God, in mutually loyal relationship. When human beings live within that design, in God's presence with loyal love, they too are holy. The vocation of biblical priesthood is to facilitate this holiness, this proximity to the holy God and the holy lives that flow out of that relational nearness. The first category concerns practicing God's presence; the second concerns reflecting God's character.

Reflection on a Novel: Participants read *Glittering Images* by Susan Howatch, a novel set in mid-twentieth-century Church of England.[26] It focuses on the personal wholeness and holiness of clergy, the wounds and sins of a particular priest, and his process of healing with the guidance of a spiritual director. Participants were asked to pick a scene or character that resonated with them, share with the group why they chose that scene, and bring it into conversation with their own life.

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24. Overview available at "Love Where We Live," Christ Church of Austin, accessed June 11, 2021, https://christchurchofaustin.org/category/love-where-we-live/.

25. Robert Farrar Capon, *An Offering of Uncles: The Priesthood of Adam and the Shape of the World* (New York: Crossroad, 1982).

26. Susan Howatch, *Glittering Images* (London: Harper, 2012).

Reflection on the Seven Deadly Sins: Participants read *Glittering Vices* by Rebecca Konyndyk DeYoung, an outstanding book on the seven deadly sins, their "cousins," how they are rooted in the heart, and the virtues to cultivate in response to these vices.[27] Participants then posted a reflection to the group.

Examination of Conscience: Participants completed an Examination of Conscience exercise, using the seven deadly sins as a rubric for reflection. See Appendix A for the Examination of Conscience.

Confession with a Priest: Participants were asked to schedule and make confession with an Anglican priest, then post to the group about the experience. They reported not so much on private or confidential matters, but on the experience of speaking aloud one's sins to another human being, in the context of the penitential rite, receiving absolution, and any reflections on the outcomes of that experience.

Reflection on Film: Participants watched *Babette's Feast* and shared how this movie reflects the fact that true holiness is not just "sin-management" or the absence of sin, but the presence of a life of virtue and joy; not just fasting well, but feasting well; not just a dutiful life, but a joyful life, and a life of loving generously. They posted a 3-5-minute video sharing their reflections.

Module Three: God's Word and Ours

One of the primary ways priests stand between God and creation to facilitate encounter is divine speech and human language, through God's Word and our words, God's revelation to us (Word) and our response to him (prayer). This category is intimately linked to the prior focus on

27. Rebecca Konyndyk DeYoung, *Glittering Vices: A New Look at the Seven Deadly Sins and Their Remedies* (Grand Rapids: Brazos Press, 2020).

holiness and the presence of God. The purpose of presence is not mere spatial proximity; it is *encounter*. God desires communion with us, a session, an intimate exchange of being. While this can and does happen wordlessly, Word is a central mode of divine encounter in the scriptures.

Collect Writing Exercise: Participants wrote their own collect prayers using the standard format. A collect prayer gathers our intentions and our focus of worship into a succinct prayer. Alan Jacobs, in *The Book of Common Prayer: A Biography*, identifies the five parts of a collect prayer as (1) the opening salutation to God, (2) the statement of a theological truth, (3) our petition, (4) our aspiration toward which the petition aims, and (5) the closing recognition that it is Christ who makes this possible.[28] Participants were invited to write a prayer for any daily or pastoral circumstance they might imagine.

Preaching Vision Statement: Participants wrote a personal vision statement for preaching, which would likely be their most frequent and public communication of God's Word. They were provided with a sample preaching vision statement illustrating the categories for consideration. Participants shared their document with each other. See Appendix A for the author's personal Preaching Vision Statement as a sample.

Digital Prayer Resources: Participants utilized a digital aid to prayer called Pray As You Go on three separate days.[29] This is an online devotional developed by British Jesuits to guide the listener through Lectio Divina in about 12 minutes. This was assigned in order to (1) give them a taste of the way a growing number of apps and websites can help them and their parish in

28. Alan Jacobs, *The Book of Common Prayer: A Biography* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2019). Students were provided with instructions based on an exercise Dr. David Taylor had assigned in one of his courses at Fuller Seminary. These instructions were shared in an email from Dr. Taylor to the author on January 11, 2018.

29. "Pray as You Go," Jesuits in Britain, accessed June 11, 2021, www.pray-as-you-go.org.

their life with God, and (2) introduce/reinforce an ancient method of engaging the Holy Scripture prayerfully (*lectio divina*). Participants then posted a brief comment about their experience.

Holy Orders Reflection: Participants read, studied, and prayed through the ACNA's service for the Ordination of a Priest, paying special attention to their vows and what it says about the call of priesthood. While the priest's life in scripture and prayer are explicitly mentioned in the service, the timing of this assignment was not entirely related to the God's Word and Ours Module. It was placed at this point in the formation process of PriestCraft as a midpoint reflection on the call and vows of ordained priesthood. The cohort discussed the salient features of the service and each other's observations and personal reflections.

Module Four: Bearing Witness

To bear witness is to speak or act in a way that reflects one's personal, first-hand knowledge. The words and actions of God's people bear witness to the revealed character, ways, and saving power of the Triune God. This representation of God to the world is what it means for the people of God to be a "kingdom of priests." Just as a Levitical priest facilitated God's presence and blessing to Israel, so God's people were called to facilitate his presence and blessing to all nations.

Bishop Todd Hunter Lectures: Participants were instructed to listen to two talks by the Bishop Todd Hunter from the Telos Collective 2017 Intersection Conference, and respond to two questions: (1) what are some intersections or creative ideas or implications of these talks for how we approach the Cultural Mandate, Great Commandment, and Great Commission, as defined in "Three Paradigms for Bearing Witness" document? (See Appendix A for the document) (2) what

did you find particularly striking, informative, or provocative from these two talks? They were then asked either to post a written response or upload a video response online.

Assigned Reading and Discussion: Participants read Chapter Six, "The Priest and Politics," from *The Christian Priest Today* by Archbishop Michael Ramsey.[30] While the primary way in which priests bear witness is verbal proclamation of the good news, the gospel also has implications for social ethics and the common good.

Summary

Participants completed assignments at a high rate and remained very engaged with the process and each other. One participant struggled slightly more than the others to complete every assignment and exercise, but participated in all retreats and gatherings nonetheless. There was no attrition either in the literal sense of dropping out of the project or even in the sense of relational disengagement or distancing. It is likely that such engagement was due to several factors: (1) a high level of interest in the subject matter, (2) the multi-sensory and multi-pronged pedagogical methods, and (3) the design principles that included a community with embodied presence, staying connected through communication technologies, and the guidance of an experienced practitioner. This project design and the diverse assignments and practical exercises were chosen for their likelihood to produce elevated levels of participation, accountability and, ultimately, formation as priests for God's sake and the sake of the world. The next chapter discusses the degree to which this was accomplished.

30. Michael Ramsey, *The Christian Priest Today* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2012).

CHAPTER FIVE

OUTCOMES

Introduction and Overview of the Chapter

The final step of the research process is the evaluation of the formational influence this learning experience had upon participants. The nature of this research is more qualitative than quantitative. Part of the research methodology utilized in the PriestCraft project was an approach called "participant observation," whereby the researcher personally facilitated all video conferences and retreats, making note of outcomes. A retrospective view, however, also afforded the clarity of hindsight and the "big picture." This part of the research, the summative evaluation, looked back to answer the question, "To what extent did this program yield what we wanted?"

Data collected through participant observation was available in the form of personal recollection, notes taken during the retreat, and complete transcripts of the video conferences. Almost eight hours of conversation were recorded, then transcribed for further study. These transcripts of the conversations yielded insights into the salient reflections of each participant as they debriefed their learning experiences.

The summative evaluation was sent one year after the final meeting of the PriestCraft Cohort. As mentioned above, a tragic accident involving the researcher's wife at the end of PriestCraft required a different approach to the post-project evaluation. Instead of a conducting a summative evaluation immediately following the project, participants received and completed it one year later. While an immediate response would have been useful, capturing fresh impressions, the longitudinal effect of PriestCraft might prove more valuable. The unintended benefit is a sifted perspective, a recollection and report that reveals what had staying power, what

truly transformed the participants, and how some participants applied their learning to their context during the year following PriestCraft. All six participants completed the summative evaluation. The evaluations were overwhelmingly positive from five of the participants and mostly positive from the sixth participant.[1] The summative evaluation was designed to yield qualitative, not quantitative data.[2] For every question asked, even if there was a multiple choice reply or a yes/no question, participants were asked to "Discuss/Explain" their answer with written responses.

Validating Conclusions

This project hypothesized that Anglican priests-in-formation on the threshold of ordination, many of whom lack a priestly or sacramental imagination for their vocation and ministry, can be formed in that imagination through a cohort-based learning experience called PriestCraft, developed by the researcher. This section reviews the qualitative data to discover what validates the hypothesis. The next section will review data that challenge or call into question the hypothesis. The primary data source considered is the summative evaluation, though personal notes from the retreats and transcripts of the video conferences will also be consulted.

Most Impactful Topics of PriestCraft

The first section of the summative evaluation sought to discover which of the following five main topics was most impactful: The Biblical-Theological Overview of the priestly motif

1. The single exception was a participant whose replies were not unfavorable regarding the project itself, but rather a perception that they entered the process with a good prior grasp of the content. PriestCraft did not reportedly do as much, therefore, to advance their formation.

2. See Appendix B for the Summative Evaluation document that was sent to participants.

from the garden to the new creation; Making Oblation; God's Holiness and Ours; God's Word and Ours; or Bearing Witness. All six participants unanimously chose Making Oblation as the most "generative, resonant, applicable, and/or transformative" topic.[3]

Though all five topics are aspects of biblical priesthood, Making Oblation is the one that most highlights what is unique (within Protestantism) about ordained priesthood and a sacramental spirituality in the Anglican tradition. This is precisely the aspect of formation often lacking in those coming from, for example, the Holiness Tradition (Methodists, Pentecostalism, etc.) or a Word-centered Tradition (Presbyterian, some non-denominational churches, etc.). Making "oblation," most familiar as a term associated with Holy Eucharist, concerns the offering up of people, places, things, and time, in praise, wonder, thanksgiving, or lament. Such an offering of all that is created, whether offered up in praise or lament, acknowledges its worth. This is a way of seeing the world as enchanted, a gift infused with the glory of God, appreciating every created thing in accordance with its *telos*. And, as we behold creation's beauty or lament its brokenness, we are priests to "the other" in creation. If there is one topic of growth, among the five, which might be considered the most formational or remedial necessity for priests-in-formation, this is the one. Participant comments explaining why they chose Making Oblation merit quotation:

> The idea of priesthood is not only biblical, but it has profound implications for theological anthropology and Christian vocation. These ideas have been largely ignored in Protestant circles and I now believe their recovery is essential for mission in our post-Christian secular world. I have worked these concepts into many of my teachings at [redacted]. These ideas have also given me a framework to understand my own ministry of blessing and offering in the world.[4]

3. This is the language from the framing of the question in the Summative Evaluation.

4. Participant A, Summative Evaluation, August 5, 2019.

I had maybe heard the word "oblation" before but never understood it as the central act of the priest, the nature of the vocation itself. I really appreciated the discussion of "offering up the parish" coupled with practical examples like "love where you live," the offertory as a time of oblation, etc. This has really stood with me. I especially loved the workplace blessing we were called to give.[5]

The most generative topics for me personally were that of oblation and bearing witness. Understanding oblation as part of the cultural mandate of Genesis as well as part of Christ's redemptive re-creative work helped me form a deeper theology of offering the world and those under my care (as well as myself), not as static items, but as those in a process of receiving God's continual grace and re-creation. It helped me see my work as creative, as well, cultivating and forming what is "found" into what God desires that person or thing to be, it's true identity hidden in Christ with God. Oblation is part of a priest's collaborative work with God's grace on behalf of the world, keeping the priest's hands dirty in the soil of grace.[6]

Personally, the priest's call to make oblation of people, places, things, and time was a good handle for me to grab ahold of in order to understand the other topics.[7]

Making oblation and Bearing witness were the two most generative topics for me. People, places, things, and time are all offered to God and in turn are offered/gifts from God.[8]

Thinking about my life as one dedicated to others... as I live as an oblate in God's service was impactful. Especially your discussion on living sacramentally (what you spoke of as sacramental spirituality), it made me realize my love of being open to what I call God sightings all around me and making them known/visible to others is a form of oblation that oftentimes comes naturally to me. It is a gift given and one that is not to be ignored.[9]

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5. Participant B, summative evaluation, August 5, 2019.

6. Participant C, summative evaluation, August 5, 2019.

7. Participant D, summative evaluation, July 31, 2019. Participant D also commented, in a video conference, on the transformative impact of seeing the whole of our lives as self-oblation: "The whole notion of oblation, I think where I've been really challenged is seeing that in a broader perspective and lens. I think in the ritualistic aspects of things in church life, it's easy to see it in that. But I think, like, one of the questions it brought up was, like, what does this look like in accounting and stuff like that. And I think my eyes are starting to be opened a little bit more on how to see that, of just being more perceptive of that. And how, like, little aspects of my daily life, a term I've always used for years now, it's like all life is an act of worship. And so, like, all that we do is worship to God, or this notion of oblation." Quoted from a transcript of a PriestCraft meeting held in November 2017.

8. Participant E, summative evaluation, August 8, 2019.

9. Participant F, summative evaluation, August 19, 2019.

Participants were asked to select up to two of the most impactful topics in PriestCraft. The only topic, other than Making Oblation, to receive multiple selections was Bearing Witness, which had two selections. It is notable that both comments on Bearing Witness below convey an oblational view of mission. That is, we participate in God's restoration of all things by making oblation of creation, including our vocational and relational contexts.

> The idea of bearing witness was helpful in seeing the priest's work as to lead the members of the church into their own priesthood, helping them to make oblation of their own lives and those in their own care and sphere of influence, teaching them to be divine collaborators and see their worlds as part of God's ongoing work of creation and redemption, rather than merely material for their own consumption.[10]

> Bearing witness as interfacing between God and his creation was applicable in that my notes about our conversations were being present with/for those of whom we are making oblation.[11]

The Explicit Aims of PriestCraft

This project began with six desired outcomes, as priests-in-formation walked together through the process. The second section of the summative evaluation sought to discover whether each of PriestCraft's explicit aims, as stated from the outset, were achieved. Each of these aims was listed, to which the participant could respond with one of the following: Not at all; Somewhat agree; Agree; Strongly Agree. Participants were then asked to discuss/explain their answer. As with the section of the summative evaluation discussed above, this section likewise indicated broad validation of the hypothesis. With six participants answering six questions each, there were thirty-six replies. Twenty-eight of those replies were either Agree or Strongly Agree. The cumulative results, broken down by degree of agreement with successful completion of the

10. Participant C.

11. Participant E.

aims were as follows: Not at all (1); Somewhat Agree (7); Agree (7); Strongly Agree (21).[12] A look at the itemized responses to the explicit aims gives us more detailed insight into the validity of the hypothesis:

1) PriestCraft helped me to better understand or re-imagine my priestly identity.

All six participants indicated that they Agree (2) or Strongly Agree (4). Participant B wrote,

> I began PriestCraft not even as a deacon, but going through the process of ordination.[13] My priestly identity, while being formed, was inarticulate in my life. On reflection, I think even if I was ordained this would have been helpful for me. I needed to know what language to use to shape the vocation. I needed guidance for how to *feel* as a priest. I needed vision for who a priest was. The content and the peer interaction were very helpful in understanding my priestly identity.

And Participant D affirmed that PriestCraft helped him re-imagine "priestly identity, that I function on some level as a mediator."

2) I gained a broader scope of understanding and articulation of my call as a bearer of God's image.

Five of the six participants indicated that they Agree (3) or Strongly Agree (2). Participant B, who answered Agree, wrote, "This one I felt like I already had a handle on as we talked about both *imago dei* and *imati Christi* at seminary at length. It was a helpful refresher."

12. It is noteworthy that four of the seven Somewhat Agree replies were from one participant whose self-perception, as mentioned above, was that they entered the process with a good prior grasp of the content. PriestCraft did not therefore do as much to advance their formation. They wrote, for example, beneath one of the prompts to discuss/explain their reply, "It's always good to have a place to reflect and discuss the priestly calling with others but I did not gain an increased sense of awe and humility," and below another, "I felt like I have a fairly good grasp of this content." This individual was a wonderful asset to the cohort and reported appreciation for the community and the exercises we did together. This feedback does not provide commentary on the validity of the hypothesis, nor the success of the project, but is helpful for future evaluation and consideration of the most suitable candidates.

13. This participant was ordained a deacon during the course of PriestCraft.

Whereas, Participant C, who answered Strongly Agree wrote, "The idea of cultural mandate, which I had read before, was broadened and deepened, understanding the role of all people to become a royal priesthood as part of bearing God's image. I could articulate better the idea of 'bearing witness,' the practices of blessing and making sacred times and places and activities, revealing the mundane to be sacred." Both of these participants had completed several years of theological education, but perhaps with different levels of either instruction provided to them or personal interest during their studies.[14]

3) I gained an increased sense of awe and humility at the call to be set apart as a priestly servant within a kingdom of priests.

Five of the six participants indicated that they Agree (3) or Strongly Agree (2). Participant A, reflecting on the sense of awe and humility, commented that, "My role as an ordained priest is caught up in this broader human call to be creation priests. By equipping the saints for the work of ministry, I am participating in the restoration of God's image in the world." Participant C similarly reported that he "walked away revering the task (and fearing it, in a healthy way), as a path of deep self-sacrifice and self-oblation."

14. This is one of the questions that, in retrospect, could have been better worded. The intent behind the question had to do with the degree to which the participant gained a better understanding of themselves as ones who make oblation, mediate God's Word and ours, facilitate holiness, and bear witness. The assumption was that the participants made the connection between this and the language of "God's image" used in the statement. It appears that some did, others did not, connect the "image" language to the priestly quadrilateral.

4) I gained a new resonance in my reading of the biblical theological story, through the lens of Adam/Eve as priests to royal priesthood in the New Heavens and New Earth.

This statement had the most diverse responses of the six explicit aims, spread out across all four degrees of affirmation, including one Not at all. This lack of consensus could reflect: (1) varied levels of biblical-theological background; (2) varied levels of biblical-theological interest; (3) a presentation of the material that missed the mark, in terms of assessing an accurate collective starting place and then taking the cohort one step further in framing the priestly motif throughout the whole canon. However, even one of the respondents who selected Somewhat Agree remarked that while, "I had previously explored many of these themes through the work of Allen Ross . . . PriestCraft put them together well and made them applicable to my ministry."[15] An intentional part of the project design was to offer a context-rich and multi-formatted pedagogy, not simply traditional teaching and reading. Several comments indicated the effectiveness of this approach, as evidenced in Participant E's remark, for example, that "what was gained grew out of our conversations and exercises."

5) My life and ministry are becoming more consonant with the theological breadth/depth of what the Bible says about priesthood.

Four of the six participants indicated that they Agree (1) or Strongly Agree (3). The other two participants selected Somewhat Agree.[16] Participant C, who strongly agreed, wrote of their increased participation in the priestly ministry of Christ in a non-parochial setting:

15. Participant A.

16. Participant A, who selected "Somewhat Agree," made a comment that merits consideration, tangentially related to the question. He suggested some items for further exploration, such as "how does a biblical account of priesthood relate to the sacraments? In what way is Holy Communion a sacrifice and oblation? How does this biblical account of Priesthood affect our understanding of unction?" While lines can be drawn from Scripture to

> Though my main context as a hospital chaplain puts me more in the other church of the world (Christ's sheep of another fold) and in the lives of those suffering, the theological and biblical depth of understanding oblation has certainly changed my life and ministry. I see how a chaplain as priest offers broken bodies up to God, asking God that this affliction may be for the life of the world and wholeness of many.

Participant F added comments that show comprehension of biblical priesthood, both the royal and ordained priesthood:

> Part of what brought deeper understanding of my role was your teaching on priests' work being about equipping and teaching other Christians, the royal priesthood, to understand how they too are to be oblates themselves, thereby growing in holiness. We are priests to a kingdom of priests – the royal priesthood, the church and how much I love God's people (or not at times) speaks to my own level of spiritual maturity and holiness and how fruitful my witness is.

6) I gained vocational clarity as ones who make vows and enters Holy Orders within the Anglican Church of North America.

Five of the six participants indicated that they Strongly Agree, adding comments such as, "I loved the Zoom call we did where we read our vows as a priest and then talked about them. I even saved another participant's shortened version of all our vows and review it regularly."[17] Also, "My path of my vocational discernment has been long and especially winding…but PriestCraft certainly gave me clarity vocationally and allowed me to gain a vision of priesthood that resonated deeply with what I have understood God to be asking of me."[18]

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the multiple Anglican views on this topic, these are somewhat further afield from the primary aims of PriestCraft. Two caveats at the outset might properly set expectations for future cohorts: (1) this process of formation will not provide traditional theological dogmatic inquiry into the subject matter, as it assumes a background in theological education; (2) to the degree that PriestCraft does, nevertheless, engage in theological reflection, it will draw more from biblical theological sources than the tradition. Scripture provides suggestive hints to answer these questions, but leaves much room for interpretation, which the tradition has engaged deeply, yielding a range of conclusions even within the Anglican tradition. These questions concerning what is actually happening during the celebration or administration of the sacraments and sacramental rites, and who administers them and why, are important and deserving of study. They are not within the more limited scope of the formational process of PriestCraft, however.

17. Participant B.

18. Participant C.

Participant responses to these six articulated aims of the PriestCraft project provide the most direct, quantifiable, and explicit answer to the question, "Was the hypothesis validated? Did the PriestCraft project form Anglican priests near the threshold of ordination in a more priestly vision and sacramental imagination for their role as priests called to serve and lead a kingdom of priests?" Both the objective quantifiable degree of agreement with these statements, on the one hand, and the subjective written statements expounding upon their selection, on the other, provide very strong validation of the hypothesis.

Short Answers to Broad Questions

The final section of the summative evaluation requested a short, written response to seven questions framed to elicit overarching reflections, unintended outcomes, open-ended comments, and feedback that might inform or improve future cohorts. As with the two previous sections of the evaluation, participant replies below reveal broad affirmation of the formational process, in line with the desired outcomes of the project. Participants were too generous with the length of their responses to include most of what they wrote, but some brief summaries and quotes will convey the tenor of their replies.

Did the PriestCraft content, community, and process help you gain a theological vision of the full scope of all human vocation that Scripture frames as priestly service? Please explain.

Participant comments touched on all three of the design elements mentioned in the question: content, community, and process:

Participant A: Yes. In particular the content on oblation and blessing.

Participant B: Yes, it…reminded me that being a priest is more than just presiding over Word and Table, it's inducting others into the life of joy while living an open life.

Participant C: The community was integral…. The content was superb…. The process of monthly work, two meetings [retreats], and zoom calls helped the learning remain relational and engaging.

Did PriestCraft provide some practical ideas for how to lead your congregation to live as priests of the world? Please explain.

Participants replied with affirmation and examples, such as:

Participant A: Yes indeed. In fact, I have since developed a Vocation Retreat at [my parish] where many of these concepts are taught to lay persons as a way of reframing employment and industry.

Participant B: Yes! I really appreciated the handouts on emotions and attitudes toward preaching and celebrating communion. After hearing about the "Come to the Table" event, I thought of many other ideas myself for bearing witness to those in my neighborhood.

Participant C: As my congregation has been one of the sick and dying, and not all Christian, yet I've gained practical ideas…. I am exploring in my current church how to cultivate a love of place and neighborhood, using a study and drawing theological maps with a sacramental "parish" understanding.

Participant D: Yes, most definitely. For me the oblation section was incredible. With regards to the congregation, I found the section on the royal priesthood making oblations practically beneficial (e.g. making oblation of people, places, things, time). It helped to form much of how I think about the activities and involvements our present congregation as well as of long-term vision.

Participant E: Yes. Working on the philosophy of preaching and writing a blessing for a local business was wonderful.

Now, more than one year later, what one or two aspects of PriestCraft had the most lasting impact, whether mentioned above or not? Please explain.

Collectively, the replies to this question overwhelmingly cluster around two themes: (1) the communal/relational context and (2) the teaching, discussion and exercises on the priestly act of Making Oblation as paradigmatic for life and ministry.

> Participant A: I really enjoyed the relationships. I have kept up with many of the participants. I also really enjoyed the "onion exercise" based of Capon.[19]
>
> Participant B: The word "oblation" is frequently in my mind as I go about my business. I also find it my role to help people understand their job as the priesthood of believers. I've used that concept in informal conversations with parishioners to say something like, "What you just described about your job at that company is a priestly one in this way..." It's given me a helpful framework to serve others.
>
> Participant C: The retreats: walking together, praying together, celebrating together, cooking together, etc. The community was foundational to the learning. The onion! How can I forget the intimate time taken with that onion?
>
> Participant D: The relationships and community that was developed. Additionally, part of that was to see the rich diversity of personalities, strengths/weaknesses, hopes, dreams, desires, etc... Yet, all called to the same priestly role. It was challenging, convicting, and encouraging. And, in some aspects continues to be. As I have noted above, the teaching on oblation was most impactful.
>
> Participant E: The communal aspect that comes with discussion, conversations, ideas, thoughts, and camaraderie are the most important. The practice of praying together and peeling the onion are the most memorable.
>
> Participant F: For me, coming along side of other priest in a small group setting for extended periods in casual settings with structured teachings who like me wanted to share and grow in their calling and understanding.

19. While the teaching on oblation was woven through much of PriestCraft, this particular exercise in which we "beheld" an onion, became memorable and iconic for everything oblation means.

The final goal, or *telos*, of the PriestCraft formational process is to make better priests, working within ACNA, for the good of the world and the glory of God. Do you think it achieves this goal?

Participant replies to this question, while affirming that PriestCraft achieved its goal, validate the project design in particular. Unprompted by the question, participants highlight the interdisciplinary approach to the content, the communal/relational setting, the integration of prayer and honest reflection, and facilitation by an experienced practitioner.

> Participant A: Yes. I would love to see this curriculum systematically employed in diocesan discernment and pre-ordination processes.
>
> Participant B: Without question! Through discussion, friendship, and the example of an exemplar priest as leader, this is a great formation course for soon-to-be priests.
>
> Participant C: I think it achieves this goal…. I feel more prepared vocationally. I feel I gained good mentorship, relationships and understanding. I feel I can better love God and love others by better understanding my sense of calling and obligations.
>
> Participant D: Yes. PriestCraft went beyond a mere intellectual exercise, which sometimes feels like we have way too much of. It gave room for personal reflection and prayer, spiritual honesty with in reflection and prayer or in our discussions, relational vulnerability (areas critical to mature as a priest...or as a human!) along with a biblical-theological foundation for what it means to be priests.
>
> Participant F: Yes, how could it not! Being fed by the word of God that pertains directly to the subject and the insight you offered as a seasoned priest who has been working and thinking through these ideas much longer than I have, well it surely opened me up to more lofty thoughts and made scheduled time for God to work within me.

Do you have any other comments on the PriestCraft experience?

Not all participants replied to this question but those who did highlighted, again, the communal/relational context and the facilitation of an experienced practitioner, with one practical suggestion.

Participant B: I quickly gained a coterie of priests whom I can speak to as I continue to seek to follow the Lord's will in my life. That was a gift!

Participant C: I pray God will grant Cliff grace to pursue his incredible gifting at vocational formation. Please don't let this be a one-time thing. Many need your wisdom, joyfulness, and devotion. You are a skilled priest who cannot afford to underestimate how God has gifted you.

Participant D: I'm deeply thankful for the experience.

Participant F: I would enjoy more breakout time with the same subset of the larger group to work through other forms of meditation, lectio and prayer.

For future PriestCraft cohorts, what would you recommend to improve it?

Recommendations included production of complete printed material, a co-facilitator, and the importance of allowing enough time (both on the part of the participant, and in the design of the process) for engaging the material.

Participant A: A well designed booklet complete with exercises and assigned readings.

Participant B: I would recommend it for all in the ordination process. If there was the ability to have another seasoned priest there like Cliff, almost a second vantage point, I think that would be helpful for comparative and contrastive discussion.

Participant C: I would simply recommend helping others take a realistic look at the time this will need, because it does take a significant commitment, and I do not want anyone else's experience diminished because of these restraints, and "to put aside all unnecessary affairs and business" (St Teresa of Avila).

Participant D: If feasible, I'd make it a little longer (at least one calendar year) or meet a little more often (E.g. additional Skype calls)

Knowing what you know now would you do PriestCraft again (not repeat it but, looking back, do it for the first time)? Would you recommend it to others?

All six participants replied that they would recommend it for others. Five of the participants offered that they would do it again for the first time, and two offer the unsolicited feedback that they would even repeat it themselves.

> Participant A: YES
>
> Participant B: Yes, of course! And yes, a hearty recommendation for all undergoing ordination in the Anglican Church.
>
> Participant C: Yes, and yes, wholeheartedly and unreservedly.
>
> Participant D: Yes (heck, I'd repeat it as well. Ha!). Yes, definitely.
>
> Participant E: No, I would not do it for the first time.[20] Yes, I would recommend it for anyone beginning their vocational journey setting them on the right path and in the right direction.
>
> Participant F: Yes, I would do it again for the first time. I also would do it again as a refresher (but maybe for only one weekend)…. I also would certainly recommend it to others!

While the feedback above demonstrates the validity of the primary hypothesis, it also affirms some secondary features of the project. The primary focus of the project was the formation of persons, not the development of skills. However, participants frequently reported in the retreat gatherings, during the video conferences, and in their written responses, how many practical ideas they got from PriestCraft or that, informed by what they learned, they created in their own contexts during the year following PriestCraft. Another validated feature of the project was the attention and intention given to the project design, to both the medium and the message;

20. The participant who had been ordained the longest felt that it covered material that they had already grasped and that in hindsight they would not enroll, but that they would recommend it for others.

the interdisciplinary, multi-sensory, and multi-contextual approach to formation was effective. These methodological and design principles proved fruitful.

Some of the oblation exercises also validated the researcher's tacit hypothesis that a robust understanding and practice of oblation provides a bridge for evangelism. One of the oblation exercises was to offer, write, and perform a business blessing for a local proprietor. This was an example of making oblation of the people (workers), place (workspace), things (products and services), and time (work/rest rhythms). Several participants proposed this idea to a friend/proprietor who was not Christian, all of whom accepted the proposal. During a video conference, one of the participants commented on the experience doing this with nonbelievers: "I mean this is very much a gospel moment with these guys. And I've got another friend that owns another company who's not a Christian also and he's got, like, a coffee shop. And I was just asking him if I could do this for him too, because it feels like a cool, like just a blessing…. So he's wildly excited and inviting his friends to come and participate."[21]

Another participant added,

> I think it's going to be rare that you find somebody that says, no, please don't bless my business. Like, if anything, there's an aspect of pride that goes, like, we want all the blessing we can get. So I think it's definitely an open door in that sense. I think it's beautiful because people see, like, the broadness of what they do actually matters to us, like, we care.[22]

The researcher's and participants' experiences with doing a business blessing illustrate how the modalities of the priestly quadrilateral can intersect each other, in this case Making Oblation and Bearing Witness. It also adds weight to the notion that Making Oblation might be considered "first among equals" in the quadrilateral, or perhaps even subsume the other

21. Participant B.

22. Participant D.

categories. All the mediatorial acts in which we represent creation to God can be framed as Making Oblation. In other words, to Bear Witness could be understood as making oblation of others, as Paul writes to the Romans: God has given him grace "to be a minister of Christ Jesus to the Gentiles. I bring you the good news so that I might present you as an acceptable offering to God, made holy by the Holy Spirit."[23] Holiness also can be framed in terms of oblation, self-oblation, as described by Paul, again to the Romans, "I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship."[24] Finally, intercession can be understood as making oblation of the lives and concerns of others, offering them up in our prayers, like incense.[25]

Challenges to the Hypothesis

The hypothesis of this project, restated, was that Anglican priests-in-formation on the threshold of ordination, many of whom lack a priestly or sacramental imagination for their vocation and ministry, can be formed in that imagination through a cohort-based learning experience called PriestCraft, developed by the researcher. While conversations during the course of PriestCraft, and comments made in retrospect, provided strong evidence for the validity of its hypothesis, what was *not said* provokes some questions and, perhaps, challenges to the hypothesis.

There is not much evidence that PriestCraft enabled participants to articulate a formal theology of the two dominical sacraments (baptism and communion) or the five sacramental rites

23. Romans 15:16.

24. Romans 12:1.

25. Psalm 141:2, Revelation 5:8; 8:3-4.

(holy orders, holy matrimony, holy unction, confirmation, confession/absolution). Of these seven, pastoral theologies pay most attention to baptism, communion, and ordination. For ordinands coming into Anglicanism from other traditions, these would be the three topics that most warrant attention. Priests ought to have answers to, or at least be conversant with, questions such as: Why ordination at all? Is it merely a "setting apart" or also an ontological change? On what biblical and historic grounds do we hold to the episcopacy? What are bishops, what is their purpose, and what is the scope of their authority? What are deacons? Why must one be ordained in order to celebrate or administer the sacraments and sacramental rites? What is actually happening in the priestly absolution and blessing? What happens at baptism? Is it regenerative? Why baptize infants? Why must the elements be consecrated by a priest? What actually happens to the elements when they are consecrated? Is it a memorial only or do the consecrated elements also mystically and materially convey the real presence of God? What is the real presence of God? What are the Anglican Communion, provinces, dioceses, and deaneries? And how do the parts relate to each other and the whole? What is the Via Media? Finally, what is the history of the Anglican Church in North America?

These questions are very important for aspiring priests (and those with long service!) to wrestle with. They could be roughly divided into questions of church practices and church order. Who does what to what things and people, what happens to those things and people, and why does it matter (church practices)? And how is the church organized and ordered from the global to the local context (church order)? At the conclusion of PriestCraft, which is explicitly hoping to orient and form people from backgrounds other than a sacramental-liturgical tradition, these are questions that still need to be addressed for aspiring priests. Because these questions lend themselves well to individual or tutored learning, with answers to be found in the theological and

pastoral literature, perhaps study groups ought to be formed with this pedagogical agenda. These are also the sorts of questions often found on ordination exams, which might be the best way to organize or frame a learning process for ordinands.

PriestCraft sought to address the broader question, from biblical theology, "what is priesthood?" Specifically, "what is the royal priesthood and how do ordained priests lead the church, in a priestly way, to participate in the priesthood of Jesus?"[26] The answer provided to both questions came in the form of the priestly quadrilateral, with special attention to the sacramental view of all creation taught in the section Making Oblation.[27] These truths have a profound impact on our understanding of the aforementioned questions about church practices and order; these truths address those questions foundationally, one might say, from the ground up rather than from the top down, and are more fundamentally concerned with the lived daily life of priesthood.

Restructuring the Project

Based on some personal observations and participant feedback, some amendments to the project would increase its effectiveness. These adjustments range from the structural level to the content itself.

26. Ordained priests do not only lead the church into her own practice of the priestly quadrilateral: to make oblation, listen to God's Word and speak theirs to him, live holy lives practicing the presence of God, and bear witness. These four aspects of priesthood are *also* what ordained priests *themselves* are doing. Their vocation is to make oblation of the church, for example, in pastoral care. They listen to God's Word for the congregation and intercede to God for the concerns of the congregation, and so on.

27. To be clear, emphasis upon Making Oblation is not a statement regarding its importance compared to the other three: Word/prayer, holiness, or bearing witness. Rather, this is the priestly mode in which ordinands coming from other traditions are least developed, and which is a valued feature of Anglicanism and which, as noted above, is a thread woven through the other three.

Structural Adjustments

First, the project could be improved by lengthening its duration. The original project design was nine months from submission of application to completion of the final evaluation, with almost seven months of engagement with the content and formational process. The addition of two months for a full nine-months of engagement, paralleling a full academic year, would be optimal. This would allow, not so much for additional material (though perhaps a little), but for more gestation with the material already included.[28]

Second, with more resources, the project could be improved by utilizing one of the emerging digital learning platforms.[29] There are many benefits to be gained by a single platform that contains the written content, assignments, video uploading and embedded viewing capabilities, a comment/chat feature, instructions and reminders, etc. This keeps everything in one place, easier for both the facilitator and participants to manage. A "one-stop-shop" platform might therefore increase interactivity and engagement. It might also make it easier to duplicate across time and geography for use in diverse contexts.

Third, a well-produced physical copy of the material, as suggested by one of the participants, would be helpful to pair with the digital version. This would allow an archivable space for those who prefer to handwrite responses, take notes, and provide a hard copy of the content for posterity, given the more finite "life span" of digital resources.

Fourth, certain topics could be improved by some additions and/or revisions to the material, such as the following.

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28. The need for this was evident in that some people did not complete all the assignments. Reading was usually the first thing to go. Exercises/practices were more likely to be completed in full.

29. There are many Learning Management Systems (LMS) designed for this purpose such as EdApp, Docebo, and Pathwright.

Holy Orders, the Sacraments, the Anglican Communion and the *Via Media*

Though the section above articulates that these questions are precisely not the purpose of PriestCraft, a brief pass through these topics would at least earmark them for further study and provide some vocabulary and categories for future inquiry. These adjustments might be accomplished with several 1-2 page "articles" on selected topics, and a glossary of terms.

Making Oblation

This aspect of priestly ministry grew in importance throughout the project. In a revision of the project this topic would receive more attention and development. Though a biblical theology of oblation is provided, it could be improved and expanded. While the project was primarily and explicitly aimed at the formation of ordained priests to lead the royal priesthood, this implied the need to answer the question, what is the royal priesthood? The development of teachings on the royal priesthood was, more than anticipated, a foray into theological anthropology and ecclesiology. A restructuring of the project might frame the priestly quadrilateral more explicitly in such terms. The teaching might include, for example, some of the insights in a resource published after the PriestCraft project was completed and, in fact, not discovered by the author until the writing of this chapter, *Dogmatic Ecclesiology: The Priestly Catholicity of the Church*, by Tom Greggs.[30] This is an excellent treatment, from the field of systematic theology, of ecclesiology through the lens of the priesthood of the church. A revised PriestCraft curriculum would incorporate some of his insights.[31]

30. Tom Greggs, *Dogmatic Ecclesiology: The Priestly Catholicity of the Church* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2019).

31. PriestCraft worked toward ecclesiological conclusions from the "bottom up," from practical need to training with theological reflection, which then in turn informed practice again. As such, PriestCraft was an exercise in praxis, bridging the gap between theory and practice. As a theologian thinking practically and a practitioner

Other resources that would enrich our understanding of oblation from a theologian and a poet-priest are the works of Duns Scotus and Gerard Manley Hopkins, respectively. Scotus speaks of things having a "thisness", referring to the particular individuality or identity of anything in creation.[32] Hopkins, very similarly, spoke of the "inscape" inherent in every created thing. Thisness and inscape both concern the particularity of any given person, place, thing, or time within creation, each with a unique glory and *telos*. When humans recognize and behold the inscape of something, Hopkins calls this act "instress."[33] This idea overlaps substantially with "Making Oblation" in PriestCraft.[34] Every human act of seeing, naming, blessing, and offering up each other, ourselves, and all creation is an act of worship.

Two other subtopics merit expansion: blessing and self-oblation. Some attention was giving to the priestly role of blessings by priests in scripture, but given its prominence in the biblical material, this topic deserves more application to the priestly life of both the royal and ordained priesthood.[35] Secondly, the imagery of oblation, of offering ourselves as a living sacrifice, is a powerful and generative way to frame the life of discipleship, and could provide

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thinking theologically, Gregg's work and the PriestCraft author/researcher arrived independently at some overlapping, mutually confirming conclusions.

32. The technical term is "haecceity" from the Latin root word for "this."

33. Hopkins "felt that everything in the universe was characterized by what he called inscape, the distinctive design that constitutes individual identity. This identity is not static but dynamic. Each being in the universe 'selves,' that is, enacts its identity. And the human being, the most highly selved, the most individually distinctive being in the universe, recognizes the inscape of other beings in an act that Hopkins calls instress, the apprehension of an object in an intense thrust of energy toward it that enables one to realize specific distinctiveness. Ultimately, the instress of inscape leads one to Christ, for the individual identity of any object is the stamp of divine creation on it." Stephen Greenblatt, ed., *The Norton Anthology of English Literature*, vol. 2, 8th ed. (New York: Norton, 2006), 2159.

34. See Gerard Manley Hopkins's poem "As Kingfishers Catch Fire" for an example of Hopkins recognizing the "inscape" of creatures and his poem itself as an act of "instress" or, in our terms, oblation. Gerard Manley Hopkins, "As Kingfishers Catch Fire," 1877, accessed June 11, 2021, https://hopkinspoetry.com/poem/as-kingfishers-catch-fire/.

35. Beginning with, most notably, Aaron's well-known blessing in Numbers 6:22-27, sometimes called "The Priestly Blessing."

fresh language for giving our lives for God's sake, and for the sake of others.[36] As followers of Jesus, we are all oblates. Finally, one small but potentially helpful alternate formulation of the priestly quadrilateral might be worthy of consideration in revision of the project. "God's Holiness and Ours" could be termed "Communion" to foreground presence, or encounter, as the heart of the matter, the *telos* of Jesus' priestly mediation. The gap in holiness, biblically, is what prevents divine/human proximity and intimacy. Similarly, "God's Word and Ours" could be termed "Conversation" to convey the dynamic exchange and relational purposes of revelation and prayer.

Application of the PriestCraft Research Project

To summarize, this project is based on the identification of two problems. The first is that even though in the Anglican tradition pastors are called "priests," many new clergy are being ordained without much background in Anglicanism or its priestly and sacramental vision. The other impetus for this project is the need for a more fulsome biblical theology of the royal priesthood within the ACNA in particular, and the Church in general. While PriestCraft develops the biblical imagery of priesthood for Anglican clergy, its lessons are applicable to every minister of the gospel, regardless of church tradition. Likewise, the biblical material is richly suggestive, robust in its reach, and calls for the *whole* people of God to live as a kingdom of priests.

36. See, for example, Karen Lee, "Anna Maria Van Schurman and Madame Jeanne Guyon: The Oblation of Self," in *Sources of the Christian Self: A Cultural History of Christian Identity* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2018), 469-93.

Application within Church and Denominational Structures

PriestCraft was created to form Anglican priests near their ordination with a biblical imagination for priesthood, both theirs and the whole people of God's, and to cultivate within these new priests a sacramental vision of life and ministry. This formational process could be offered again for individuals recruited in precisely the same way the first cohort was formed: open invitation issued through diocesan channels, with an application process. Offered annually, six to ten priests every year would be able to complete it. Another way PriestCraft could work within a diocese is by bishops requiring this formational process for everyone on a priestly ordination track in their diocese. Depending on how big the diocese is, or how many dioceses would want to implement it, other seasoned priests could be trained to facilitate cohorts.

PriestCraft could also be adapted for the formation of pastors in other traditions. One does not have to be Anglican to have a sacramental vision of life and ministry, and pastors in every tradition ought intentionally to pursue a robust understanding of the whole church's priestly call. PriestCraft could be adapted to make it a valuable formational process for any pastors-in-training, regardless of their church tradition.

Lastly, the content of PriestCraft can find application, by ordained priests who internalize and embody it, in many contexts of ministry. The imagery and meaning of our priesthood can be woven or embedded in teachings, sermons, small group curriculums, and student ministries. To see oneself as an ordained priest, participating in the priesthood of Christ, can refresh one's vision of pastoral care, mission, worship, and almost every arena of ministry.

Application to the Whole People of God

At the outset of this project, the only participants in view were soon-to-be and recently ordained priests in the Anglican Church of North America. By the end of the project, however, it became clear how deeply the biblical material on priesthood could be mined for Christian discipleship, and how untapped it has been in the history of the church. Even the Reformation's emphasis on the priesthood of all believers, as revolutionary as it was, left much precious biblical material beneath the surface.[37] The teachings within PriestCraft could benefit the whole church three ways.

First, a PriestCraft cohort for the whole people of God, walking through a revised version of the material, would benefit the church. Some sections would be eliminated or reduced, other sections amplified, and the cohort could be led by any mature believer who personally embodies the curriculum.

Second, publishing the material could make it available to a broad audience, though the formational process that comes through the exercises and relationships would be lost. This would, however, allow many more people to discover the riches of our priesthood, our identity and vocation to live for the sake of God and the world he so loves. Another possible application of PriestCraft, in book form, would be to narrow the focus and concentrate on Making Oblation as a lens for discipleship. This framing of the book would cast vision for life as oblates, making oblation of creation (wonder, worship, art, and creation care), oblation of others (evangelism, mission, compassion, and intercession), oblation of place (loving where we live), oblation of

37. The Reformation's emphasis on the priesthood of all believers primarily declericalized the church, legitimated (especially in Luther) all vocations, and removed some ecclesial barriers to the presence of God. In other words, all believers have equal access to God and a vocational calling to the church or monastery is not a higher calling than any other. This was radical and much-needed, but as this study has shown, there are yet more implications of our royal priesthood for Christian discipleship.

time (Sabbath-keeping and Sabbath lifestyle), and self-oblation (surrender to God and sacrifice for others).

Conclusion

The Anglican Church of North America has attracted aspiring or experienced clergy from backgrounds that have not traditionally formed in their ministers a sacramental and priestly vision, both hallmarks of Anglican spirituality. To address this need, this pilot project gathered a cohort of Anglican priests-in-formation to develop in them a priestly and sacramental imagination for life and ministry.

The formation process was accomplished through reflection on the four episodes of priestly imagery in Scripture: (1) Adam and Eve as priests in the garden temple; (2) the Levitical priesthood established at Sinai; (3) Jesus the great high priest; and (4) the whole people of God as a royal priesthood. From reflection on these four episodes emerge four modes of priestly activity, referred to here as the "priestly quadrilateral": (1) Making Oblation; (2) God's Holiness and Ours; (3) God's Word and Ours; and (4) Bearing Witness. With this biblical theological foundation, the priestly quadrilateral forms the core content of the formational process and curriculum.

Clergy are called to lead the church into a biblical vision of her priesthood. But this biblical vision is not only the *ends* to which clergy are called to lead the church; it is also the *means* by which clergy are called to lead. In other words, clergy do not only lead the church to be a people who make oblation in their lives; clergy themselves also make oblation *of the church*. Likewise, clergy themselves live in holiness, scripture and prayer, and bear witness to the gospel in their own lives and in their leadership as part of the *means* by which they lead the

whole people of God to the same *ends* in their quotidian lives. This project's goal was to prepare ordained clergy as priests to the church, the royal priesthood, who in turn are priests to the world.

Royal Priesthood Is God's Ideal for Humanity

This project began by proposing that the biblical motif of priesthood be recovered to shape our imagination for ordained ministry. No single motif is comprehensive, though shepherd imagery, which has led to "pastor" as the most common name for clergy, is most common. The biblical material and imagery of priesthood is just as rich, but much less understood and, therefore, less applied and formative in the training of clergy. This project contends that biblical priesthood provides a near-comprehensive vision for the vocation of ordained ministers and deserves recovery. The application, however, goes even further than that; royal priesthood is, in fact, God's ideal for humanity.

There are three pinnacles of humanity in the biblical narrative, all of which highlight humanity as royal priests. The first is Adam and Eve as priests in the garden temple, before they succumbed to the temptations of the serpent. The last is redeemed humanity in the New Creation, where humans are made "to be a kingdom and priests to serve our God, and they will reign on the earth."[38] Between these two is the absolute zenith of humanity, Jesus of Nazareth, who is the Son of Man, the second Adam, the king of kings, and our great High Priest. He is at once fully divine and fully human, the truly human one. The fact that each of these high points of humanity feature royal and priestly vocations is a strong indicator that this is, in fact, God's ideal for humans. Royal priesthood is the *telos* of humanity.

How then, do we live this ideal? By participating in the priesthood of Jesus himself. Our

38. Revelation 5:10.

royal priesthood is derived from Jesus' priesthood, our true humanity found by participating in Him, especially in his baptism, crucifixion, and resurrection.

Baptism Is Our Ordination to the Royal Priesthood

Baptism is every believer's ordination to the priesthood. We are delivered from bondage and death; we are washed and vested in garments of grace. Then, like Jesus, we receive the descent of the Spirit upon us as we are called sons and daughters of the Father, in whom he is well pleased. Just as Jesus' baptism inaugurated his ministry, so does ours. Baptism is the anointing and ordination of every believer to their new vocation as part of God's royal priesthood. From that moment forward, in Christ, we are commissioned to represent God to the world and the world to God. Baptism thrusts us into, as N. T. Wright puts it, "The royal and priestly vocation of all human beings…to stand at the interface between God and his creation, bringing God's wise and generous order to the world and giving articulate voice to creation's glad and grateful praise to its maker."[39]

The Royal Priesthood Follow Our Great High Priest in the Way of the Cross

Our life as royal priests, like Jesus', is cruciform. If living out our priesthood means representing creation to God, then we will often bear creation's sorrows, especially those of fellow image-bearing humans. We will voice not only creation's praise, but also her laments. The cruciform shape of priesthood became especially poignant and personal on January 25, 2004, when I lay prostrate on the wood floor of the chancel of the Pro Cathedral Church of St. Clement in El Paso, Texas. It was a posture of complete vulnerability, arms outstretched,

39. N. T. Wright, *After You Believe: Why Christian Character Matters* (New York: HarperCollins, 2012), 80-81.

earthbound, face down and, whether intended or not, a horizontal simulation of Jesus' outstretched body on the cross. This moment is common in Anglican ordination of priests. It is a posture of givenness to Christ and his church. Just as Jesus lay down his life for his friends, so does the priest vow to surrender oneself for the praise of God's glory, and for the sake of his church and the world.

Consistent with many actions of the priest in Anglican worship, however, the priest serves as a symbolic representative of the whole people of God. Through liturgical actions of the priest, the whole church processes into worship following the cross, makes oblation of their lives at the Table, and processes back into the world on mission. Similarly, the whole people of God lie prostrate in surrender to God, laying themselves down for their friends. Robert Farrar Capon evokes the imagery of oblation to describe the priestly life as a cruciform life, a life for the sake of others:

> Priests are to spend their days offering for others: the Good Shepherd gives his life for the sheep. The beholding, the loving—the adoration, if you will—of my own being is somebody else's business, not mine. Persons were meant to enter into a dance of mutual oblation, a simultaneous offering of each other. The City, the web, history itself, is the tissue woven by such priestly acts.[40]

Like Jesus our great high priest, the royal priesthood spend their days offering for others. St. Peter makes the relationship between our royal priesthood and our mission explicit, even causal, declaring that "you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, *that you may proclaim* the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light."[41] Like Old Testament priests who represented God to the nation of Israel, so Israel would become a whole nation of priests representing God to the world.

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40. Robert Farrar Capon, *An Offering of Uncles; the Priesthood of Adam and the Shape of the World* (New York: Crossroad, 1982), 119.

41. 1 Peter 2:9.

Jesus was both priest and sacrifice; so are the people of God, in Christ, priests of the world who lay down their lives as a living sacrifice for the world. Jesus entered deep into the pain of humanity and even our own wounds. Ross Hastings, a theology professor addressing the student body at Regent College, speaks of this crucial dynamic this way: "The remarkable thing about the economy of God, and the economy of our priesthood in light of his priesthood, is that it is actually through our wounds, and our expressions of receiving love in the midst of our wounds, that we then share that love with the people around us."[42] The royal priesthood follow our great High Priest in the way of the cross.

The Royal Priesthood Practice Resurrection in Christ

St. Paul weaves together our participation in Christ's baptism and crucifixion with the resurrection of Christ in his letter to the Romans: "We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life."[43] This new life is the life of the new creation, inaugurated by the resurrection of Jesus Christ. What does this have to do with priesthood? Jesus' resurrection is the first fruits of the new heavens and the new earth, where redeemed humanity is described primarily as royal priests. We see this, for example, in St. John's greeting to "the seven churches that are in Asia" where he describes redeemed humanity like this: "To him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood and made us a *kingdom*, *priests* to his God and Father, to him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen."[44] And then later in

42. Ross Hastings, "The Priest and the Priests: The Difference His Presence Makes" (Lecture, Regent College Retreat, 2011).

43. Romans 6:4.

44. Revelation 1:5-6. Emphasis mine, indicating both kingly and priestly language.

his vision, he describes the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders prostrate before God singing, "You have made them to be a kingdom and priests to serve our God, and they will reign on the earth."[45] Priesthood is not only God's temporal ideal for humanity, but also our eternal vocation in the new heavens and the new earth, inaugurated by Jesus' resurrection.

This resurrected life, of which we have a foretaste now but will enjoy in festive completion in the new heavens and the new earth, is characterized by joy, delight, wonder, and love. "He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away."[46] God's grace is effulgent, his beauty is fecund, and his joy abounds. The royal priesthood will participate fully in the overflowing love of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Capon captures the creative exuberance of God and his oblation-making children:

> God has Gardens to give away! He has cities to spare! He has history he hasn't even used! The last of all the mercies is that God is *lighter* than we are, that in the heart of the Passion lies the divine Mirth, and that even in the cities of our exile he still calls to Adam only to catch the glory, to offer the world, and to return the service that shapes the City of God.[47]

Even now, in our "cities of exile" we offer the world as royal priests, and thus contribute to the shape of the City of God. When our exile has ended, and we are someday home again in the new heavens and the new earth, our priestly service will continue unbroken and augmented, a fully redeemed participation in the "divine Mirth."

45. Revelation 5:10.

46. Revelation 21:4.

47. Capon, *An Offering of Uncles*, 149.

We Are All Oblates

In the monastic tradition of the church, individuals renounce all worldly goods and all other vocational aspirations, taking vows to follow a rule of life as part of a religious order. Some orders, such as the Benedictines, have a category for those who want to devote themselves to the same rule of life while keeping their previous commitments and community. Oblates are not necessarily ordained, nor do they take the same vows as the monks or relocate to a monastery, but they have consecrated themselves to the Lord in this special way. The word "oblate," from the latin *oblatus*, denotes someone who has been offered.

We are all oblates. The community of the redeemed not only offers up all people, places, things, and time, but we also make oblation of ourselves. Paul employs the priestly language of offerings and sacrifices in one of his great summative statements concerning Christian discipleship: "I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship."[48] To be an oblate, to offer up our bodies—which indicates every aspect of our quotidian lives—is our act of worship.

Our priestly call is to make an offering of our entire lives: our bodies, minds and hearts. The people, places, things and time of our life all go on the altar. Our claim to comfort and self-rule go on the altar. God receives it all, both our beauty and brokenness, and he makes something of it, much like happens in Holy Eucharist. What begins as raw material, grapes and wheat, is cultivated by humans who make oblation of it, transforming it into bread and wine, which the Holy Spirit then transforms at Table as it is consecrated into a sacrament of God's real presence. Just as the Eucharistic elements are holy, set apart through the oblation at Table, so are we. God

48. Romans 12:1.

takes the raw ingredients of our lives and makes something more beautiful, good, and true of us, in Christ. This offering of ourselves is only holy and acceptable because we are united to Christ. In him we are both priest and offering, the "offerer" and the "offered," to the praise of God's glory.

Ordained Priests Love Jesus Wholeheartedly and Lead the Royal Priesthood Humbly

The apostle Peter's triple denial of Jesus on the night of Jesus' arrest was followed by a triple affirmation of his love for Jesus in a remarkable post-resurrection encounter. Three years earlier, Jesus had called Peter to follow him and, as time would tell, chosen him to be an apostle of the church. Every consideration of the offices of ministry in the church begins with the apostles, with Peter sometimes accorded special status, based on some interpretations of Jesus' words that "upon this rock I will build my church," his leading role in the Acts of the Apostles, and his epistles. He is the author, in fact, of the phrase "royal priesthood," which encapsulates the biblical ideal for humanity described in this project.[49] Regardless of whether Peter occupied an office more elevated than the other apostles, all believers recognize him as an iconic representative of ordained pastoral leadership.

Ordained Priests Love Jesus Wholeheartedly

What can we learn about the call to ordained priesthood by looking at Jesus' last encounters with Peter? We learn that one supreme qualification for holding a ministry office towers above other valid considerations such as gifting, desire, effectiveness in ministry, and even the encouragement and affirmation of one's community. This supreme qualification is as

49. 1 Peter 2:9.

simple as it is necessary: love for Jesus.[50]

When Jesus rises from the dead and sees Peter for the first time, over a seafood breakfast he prepares for Peter, Jesus asks him three times, "Do you love me?" And three times Peter says, "yes," a moment that heals the wound of Peter's three denials with powerful symmetry. Jesus gives Peter the opportunity to undo his denial by confessing with his mouth what he truly believes in his heart. Jesus does not frame this first shocking post-resurrection exchange by asking, "Do you believe that I am Lord?" or "Do you believe that I have risen from the dead?" or even "Do you recant your denials of me?" Jesus goes to what matters most in this moment, to the place of deepest affections and loyalties, to that which best defines Jesus' own relationship with his Father: love.

Three times Peter says, "Yes, I love you" and three times Jesus follows Peter's confession of love with the commission to "feed my sheep." Peter's devotion and Peter's commission are related to each other like seed and fruit. The natural fruit of love for Jesus is to love other people who belong to Jesus. Likewise, Peter may only be called and commissioned to his apostolic office to love others if he first has a seed of love for Jesus.

It is not always the case, unfortunately, that the fruit of ordained ministry grows from the seed of love for Jesus. Ordained ministries commonly exist and may even thrive based on other motivations. Women and men occasionally enter ordained ministry without a deep love for Jesus or, more commonly, lose their first love somewhere along the way. Love for Jesus can be supplanted by love for status, a consistent paycheck, political agendas, the validation of success, power, or the need to be needed. Church growth models or cultural accommodation can eclipse

50. This observation has been attributed to New Testament scholar Dr. Dale Bruner who reportedly said, "The one ordination question that matters most is the one posed by Jesus to Peter, 'do you love me?'" (paraphrased). I do not recall where I first heard this attribution and have been unable to verify Dr. Bruner as the source.

the simplicity of the call to love Jesus and feed his sheep.[51] Cultivation of a loving relationship with Jesus is the first and last task of the ordained priest; out of such love will flow all service and leadership in the congregation. Jesus explicitly names this priority for all believers. When asked the greatest commandment, he replies with the Shema, to love God and others.[52]

Ordained Priests Lead the Royal Priesthood Humbly

We also see, in Jesus' encounter with Peter, that Jesus calls and commissions flawed humans. Peter, who denied Jesus three times even after a warning by Jesus that his loyalty would be tested, gives hope and courage to every ordained priest who knows their own weakness and sin. Ordained priesthood is a daunting call, only possibly through participation in Jesus's relationship with the Father, through the indwelling power and presence of the Holy Spirit.

Henry Fonda stars as a priest in the 1947 film "The Fugitive," based on Graham Green's novel *The Power and the Glory*. The film is set in a fictional nation somewhere in post-revolutionary Latin America, at the end of a purging of all priests from the country; they have all fled or been executed. This priest is the last one remaining in the country, having intentionally stayed to the end, baptizing, performing last rites, and trying to celebrate Eucharist. He is aware of his flaws, questioning whether it was pride or faithfulness that kept him going, but he too is finally captured and sentenced to execution. In one of the final scenes of the movie, the military officer who pursued and captured him sits next to the priest and mocks his faith. The priest, flawed but faithful, replies, "Oh, but I'm not a saint. I'm not even a brave man. I'm a coward.

51. Two qualifications are necessary. First, while ordained priests aspire to the pure motives of love for Jesus and others in ministry, we are all sinful and broken, wounded healers in the congregation. Self-awareness of our demons, wounds, and besetting sins can help safeguard us against the common idols that can fuel a ministry. Secondly, there is much practical wisdom within church growth principles, as well as a need for contextual engagement with culture. These are not incompatible with genuine love for Jesus and people, but we must be careful that means do not overtake the ends.

52. Mark 12:30.

The priesthood is large. It's tremendous. I was always too small for it."

The priesthood is large, it's tremendous and every one of us is too small for it. This is true the saints among us and throughout history, the royal priesthood, and the ordained. It is, in fact, liberating to know that our priesthood is not only too large but, ultimately, not even ours. Our priesthood is derived from Jesus our priest. The author of Hebrews charges us, therefore, "since we have a great high priest who has ascended into heaven, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold firmly to the faith we profess."[53] He is vast and beautiful. Jesus is the

> heir of all things, and through whom also he [God] made the universe. The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word. After he had provided purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven. So he became as much superior to the angels as the name he has inherited is superior to theirs.[54]

The priesthood is large. It's tremendous. We were always too small for it, but ordained priests can participate in the priesthood of Jesus who "fills all in all."[55] We can participate in his priesthood as we bear witness to the love of God with the person in front of us, supplied with new mercies for the day before us, delighting in "all things counter, original, spare, strange," and loving the particular place where God has sent us.[56] We can stand, in and with Christ, between heaven and earth as we announce the gospel of grace that absolves all sin, stand at the Table of the Lord to invite his children to encounter the living God in the holy meal he gave us, and pronounce God's blessing. We can serve and lead the whole people of God into their royal priesthood, that they might start practicing eternity right here and now, making oblation,

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53. Hebrews 4:14.

54. Hebrews 2:1-4.

55. Ephesians 1:23.

56. From the poem "Pied Beauty," in *Gerard Manley Hopkins, The Major Works* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 132.

practicing holiness in the nearness of God's presence, engaging God's Word, and bearing witness as a kingdom of priests to all nations.

St. John's Revelation shows us the glorious fulfillment of the promise in Exodus 19:5 that God's people will be a kingdom of priests, representing God to all nations. He sees a multi-ethnic church of kings and priests gathered in the new heavens and the new earth, for the praise of God's glory:

> After this I looked, and behold, a great multitude that no one could number, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, with palm branches in their hands, and crying out with a loud voice, 'Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!' And all the angels were standing around the throne and around the elders and the four living creatures, and they fell on their faces before the throne and worshiped God, saying, 'Amen! Blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and honor and power and might be to our God forever and ever! Amen.'[57]

57. Revelation 7:9-12.

APPENDIX A

COURSE-RELATED DOCUMENTS

THE BLESSING OF STRANGELAND BREWERY
JANUARY 31: EPIPHANY III 2015 AUSTIN, TEXAS
THE REV. CLIFTON D. S. WARNER

All make the Sign of the Cross. The leader begins:

Blessed be God, who has begun a good work in us. Blessed be the name of the Lord.

All respond:

Now and for ever.

The leader may use these or similar words to introduce the blessing:

Jesus showed us the dignity of labor. He was known as the carpenter's son, and he willingly worked with the tools of his trade. Through the labor of our hands, we bring God's blessing upon ourselves and others. Let us pray for all who will work here and for those who will share the fruit of their labor.

Then the Scripture is read:

Listen to the words of the apostle Paul to the Thessalonians: 1 Thes 4:10-12

We urge you, brothers [and sisters], to progress even more, and to aspire to live a tranquil life, to mind your own affairs, and to work with your own hands, as we instructed you, that you may conduct yourselves properly toward outsiders and not depend on anyone.

The reader concludes:

The word of the Lord.

All respond:

Thanks be to God.

After a time of silence, all join in prayers of intercession and in the Lord's Prayer. The leader then speaks the prayers of blessing.

Of the Offices

O God, in your wise providence you are glad to bless all human labor, the work of our hands and of our minds. Grant that all who plan and conduct business in this office may, through your guidance and support, come to right decisions and carry them out fairly. We ask this through Christ our Lord. R. Amen.

Of the Brewery

God, our all-provident Father, you have placed the earth and its fruits under our care, so that by our labor we will endeavor to ensure that all share in the benefits of your creation. Bless all those who

will use this building either as buyers or sellers, so that by respecting justice and charity they will see themselves as working for the common good and find joy in contributing to the progress of the earthly city. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

R. Amen.

Then holy water may be sprinkled on the office, shop, or factory, and on the participants.

Of the Beer

Merciful father, we thank you for the goodness of your creation and for the gift of human creativity. Just as your first miracle produced the best of fermented drink, so your last commandment joined transformed grape and grain as a means for us to remember and partake of you. Now, as we make this beer, we ask that you would likewise pour out your grace and blessing upon all the farmers who sourced it, the craftsmen who made it, the business people who sell it, the workers who distribute and serve it and, finally, all enjoy it. Made this beer delight all who savor it and point to the beauty of your splendor. In Jesus name, and for his glory, we ask these things. Amen.

All make the Sign of the Cross, as the leader concludes:

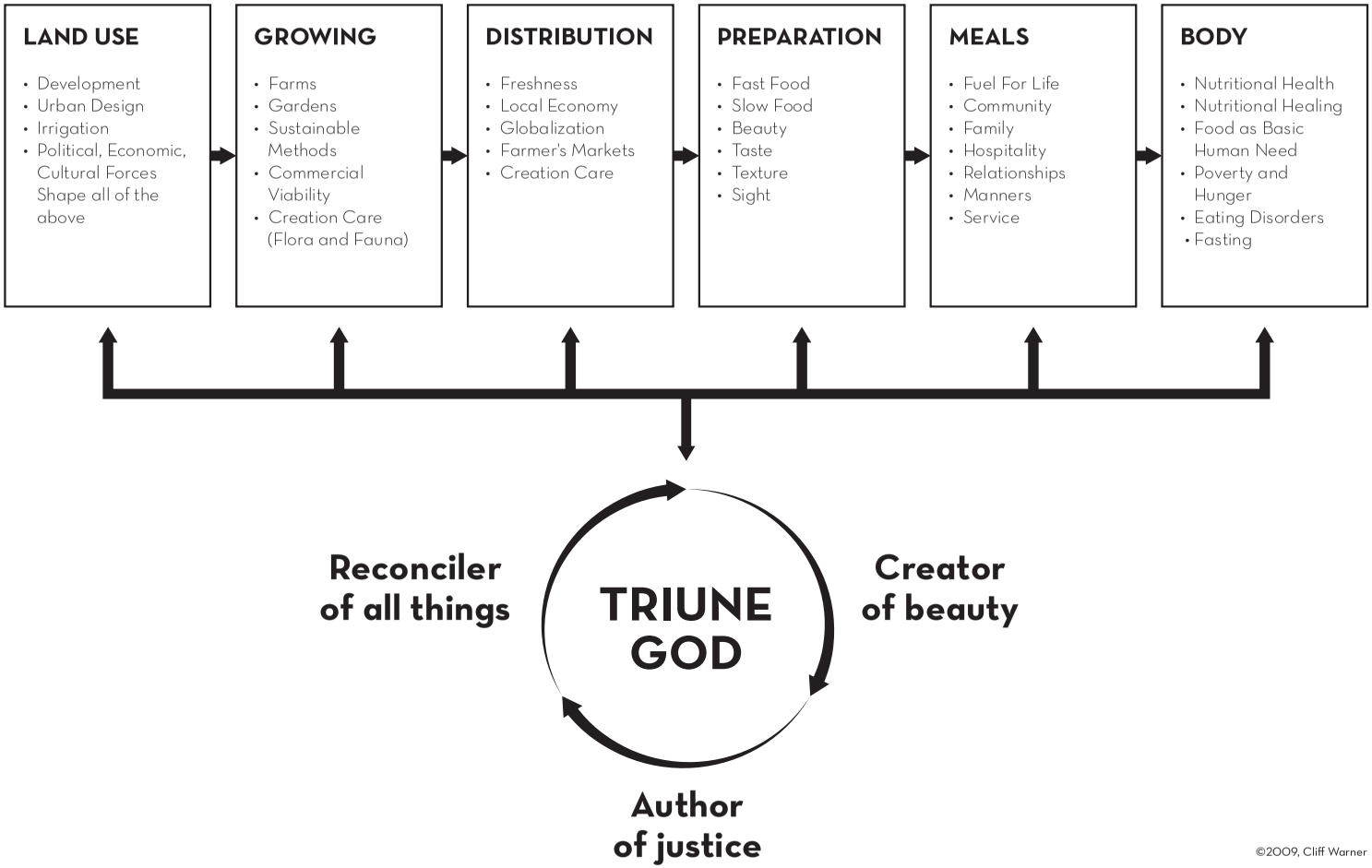
> May God, the Father of goodness, who commanded us to help one another as brothers and sisters, bless this building with his presence and look kindly on all who enter here.

R. Amen.

> And may almighty God bless you, in the name of the Father, and the Son, + and the Holy Spirit.

CHRISTCHURCH

Food: The Spectrum of Issues



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Sacramental Spirituality

The Rev. Clifton D. S. Warner

Christian Spirituality is concerned with the lived life of Christian faith. There are different kinds of spiritualities, different approaches to daily life in union with Christ, none of which are mutually exclusive, all of which may be biblical and overlapping. Each emphasizes a different aspect of the Christian faith, such as contemplative spirituality, evangelical spirituality, missional spirituality, etc..

Sacramental Spirituality refers to interaction with God as we live with delight, wonder, and love, encountering him in people, places, things, and time. It's a way of living the Christian life with particular attention to God as Creator. As we make oblation in these four arenas of creation, we encounter the living God.

What does Sacramental Spirituality have to do with the sacrament and celebration of Holy Eucharist? The sacrament and celebration of the Eucharist gathers into itself—into the bread and wine created by God and cultivated by human work—all that has been created and cultivated in this world. What happens at the table of communion is a microcosm of all of life. At table, heaven and earth collide. They collide in the very ordinary material of what was once simple wheat and grapes. That wheat and those grapes are cultivated by human work into human artifacts. They are a cultural product, made my humans, whose vocation is to be culture-makers.

Just as heaven and earth collide at the Lord's Table, in the most common materials of creation, so do heaven and earth collide in the most common and ordinary people, places, things, and moments. "Earth's crammed with heaven, And every common bush afire with God: But only he who sees takes off his shoes" (Elizabeth Barrett Browning).

To walk through our days with eyes that see and ears that hear the presence of God in every corner of his creation, and then to pay attention to it's exquisite uniqueness, to love it, and then respond to God with wonder and gratitude—that is to live with a sacramental spirituality.

At table, heaven and earth collide not only in the raw natural products of grape and wheat, but specifically in the cultivated products of bread and wine. Sacramental spirituality encompasses not only our loving regard of creation as we find it, but also our vocations by which we make something of the world God made. Our work is holy, consecrated unto the Lord. Sacramental spirituality regards everyday work and vocation as priestly activity, a worshipful

offering of creation up to the Lord, and a place obedience to the Cultural Mandate, the Great Commission, and the Great Commandment.

Lastly, within creation, among the myriad people, places, things, and moments of our world, certain ones might be called "privileged." In terms of place, the Celtic Christians called these "thin places." In terms of people, the Bible calls them "the least of these." In terms of moments, the Bible calls this sacred time "Sabbath." The sacraments of Holy Eucharist and Holy Baptism are the most obvious "privileged" ways of encounter with God through the material world, and the source from which the phrase Sacramental Spirituality is derived. Anglicanism refers to five other practices of the church as sacramental rites, which might are also privileged means of encounter: confession, unction, marriage, confirmation, ordination. These are all moments in time involving physical actions and materials, in which God is present to his people.

Our whole lives are gathered into Christ. Each little moment, all of who we are, all that God has made in the world, and that we have made of the world, it all has new color and vibrates in tune with a different note when we have ears to hear and eyes to see. Sacramental Spirituality sees each particular person, place, thing, and moment of time as a potential encounter with God, and as the material God uses to shape our lives into the image of His Son.

An Examination of Root Sin Based on the Seven Deadly Sins[1]

Pride: Pride is the mother of all sin

Do I refuse or resist admitting my weaknesses?

Do I dwell on the failings of others?

Do I judge/condemn others, in my thoughts or words?

Do I rank myself better than others or demand certain treatment because of my "status"?

Do I harbour hatred for another?

Do I refuse to learn from others or reject their opinions, especially when they disagree with me?

Am I stubborn?

Do I refuse to admit I am wrong or to accept that another person has a better idea?

Am I arrogant?

Do I hold others in contempt?

Do I assume I am right and others are wrong without ensuring I actually understand them or their ideas?

Vanity: Vanity is excessive concern about what others think of me –not just what they think of my appearance.

Am I overly concerned about what others think of me? Have I allowed this to influence my actions?

Do I lie or exaggerate to make myself look good?

Have I wasted undue time and money on clothes and appearance?

Am I discontent with my lowly position, or have I resented the role that Christ asks of me?

Do I experience frequent anxiety regarding how I am perceived? Do I allow this to influence my actions?

Am I cowardly when confronted with doing or saying something that should be said or done because of my concern for the perception of others?

Do I cling to my own perception of myself instead of allowing others to help me understand how I really am?

1. "An Examination of Root Sin Based on the Seven Deadly Sins," accessed June 16, 2021, https://www.spiritualdirection.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/Conscience-Exam-7-Capital-Sins-v1.pdf.

Lust: Lust is disordered desire for sexual pleasure, isolated from its procreative and unitive purpose.

Custody of the Eyes: "Whoever looks at a woman with lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart" (Mt 5:28)

Do I view others as mere sexual objects rather than as persons to be loved and honored?

Do I depersonalize others and express lack of concern for their slavery within pornography to enable my own pleasure?

Pornography: On internet? or TV?

Impure Thoughts:

Do I entertain impure thoughts?

Impure Acts:

Alone, or with another?

Anger/Wrath: Anger is undue desire for vengeance-undue in cause or in amount.

Do I harbour resentment, grudges, and hatred in my thoughts?

Do I nurture imaginary angry conversations?

Am I slow to forgive?

Do I lose my temper?

Do I easily get frustrated with people?

Do people easily get on my nerves? Impatience:

How do I carry my cross?

Am I impatient or frustrated with people, family, events, sufferings, sicknesses?

Covetousness/Avarice: Avarice is the excessive love of possessing things

Am I overly concerned about my own comfort and well-being?

Am I resentful of my lack of money or resources?

Am I generous in giving?

Do I give with a cheerful heart?

Do I cheat, steal, fudge, or fail to pay my bills on time?

Do I use people for my own ends and advantage?

Do I waste money?

Envy: Envy is sadness at the happiness of another

Do I envy or experience jealousy regarding the abilities, talents, ideas, good-looks, intelligence, clothes, possessions, money, friends, family, of others?

Am I saddened or frustrated at the success of others?

Gossip:

- Do I judge others in my thoughts?
- Do I damage the reputation of others by my words, attitude, or looks?
- Do I repeat accusations that might not be true?
- Do I exaggerate?
- Do I fail to defend the reputation of others?
- Do I fail to keep secrets?
- Do I despise others of different race, class or culture?

Lies:

- Do I lie or exaggerate?

Sloth: Laziness, especially in the things of God. Sloth is a sorrow in the face of spiritual good--it makes you lethargic and want to do nothing.

Do I seek God above all else, or have I put other priorities ahead of him? (e.g. friendships, ambition, comfort and ease)

Do I get so caught up in the things of this world that I've forgotten God?

Do I risk losing my faith/piety by bad company, bad reading, cowardice, or pride?

Do I trust God, especially in times of difficulty? Do I attend church each and every Sunday? Do I neglect to say my daily prayers?

Do I entertain distractions in prayer, or fail to give God due concentration in prayer? (Note: Not giving God the **effort** he deserves in prayer is a sin, but it is not the same thing as *involuntary* weakness in mental distractions.)

Do I make a prayerful preparation before church and a good thanksgiving after church? Do I receive Holy Communion while in a state of serious sin?

Do I neglect to seek Confession before Holy Communion?

Do I take the Lord's name in vain or use other foul language?

My Neighbour:

- Am I lazy and slow to help others?
- Do I only serve others when it is convenient, pleasurable, or when I am forced to do so?
- Have I been attentive to the needs of my neighbour, the needs of my family?
- Is my conversation focussed on my own pleasure, or on others?
- Is my humour insensitive to others?

My Family:

- Do I focus more on myself than on the needs of others?
- Do I spend time with my family? Do I manifest my care and concern for them? Am I forgiving and tolerant of them? Do I scandalize them by a bad or lazy example?

Punctuality and Discipline:

- Do I waste other people's time by being late?
- Do I sin against God and the congregation by being late for church?
- Do I neglect to go to sleep on time and allow my curiosity, gaming or other entertainment to determine my schedule?
- Do I make good use of my time in service to others, or do I waste time needlessly? E.g. TV or internet?
- Do I fail to plan good use of relaxation and recreation, knowing that I need to rest well in order to pray and serve others?

Gluttony: Gluttony is the inordinate desire for food.

Am I overweight?

Do I eat more than I need? To how serious an extent?

Do I spend excessive money on food? Do I drink alcohol excessively?

Do I drive after drinking?

Do I eat greedily and with little consideration for those at table with me? Do I fail to give money to help the hungry?

Do I fail to regularly practice fasting and self-denial?

A Personal Vision for Preaching

The Rev. Clifton D. S. Warner

I see sermons as a "verbal sacrament," (Karl Barth coined this phrase, I believe) a moment of corporate worship within which we experience the real presence of God through his word. God's word is living and active, does not return void, with power every Sunday to pierce the heart and change the mind, to comfort and to challenge, to instruct and to inspire, all for the praise of his own glory. My ultimate aim in preaching is that Jesus would be exalted, drawing all people to himself, resulting in changed lives.

Here are some of the principles I follow in my approaching to preaching. No single sermon will balance all of these traits, but my hope is that anyone who hears my preaching over the long haul would experience these qualities in my preaching:

Sharp mind and tender heart. I want to preach sermons that the PhD's in the room will find satisfying for the background research and rhetorical coherence, but that the less/little educated will also find compelling. Having said that, I would rather lose people because they want more intellectual sermons, than lose people because they want more accessible and heart-connected sermons.

Culturally intelligent. I want to preach sermons that are aware of what is going on in our culture, from pop-culture to high-culture, from local news to international events, from sociological trends to politics, ethnicity, gender, humor, and language.

Heavy on expository preaching. Let the text drive the sermon. Big Idea preaching, meaning the sermon does not always have to deal line by line with the text, but the main point of the sermon usually hews closely to the main point of the text, sometimes allowing for the main point of the sermon to come from a sub-point of the text. Occasional topical sermons.

A "well-balanced diet" of Genres. Preaching from both testaments and differing genres in the course of a year. Following the lectionary for a season helps with this.

Not focused on, but always sensitive to non-Christians. Choose illustrations accordingly. Sometimes addressing them directly. Sometimes providing caveats like, "you might be questioning whether [fill in the blank] is even true . . ."

Pastoring the parish through preaching. I preach to the actual people in front of me, considering their situation in life, our local context, etc. I sometimes address them personally saying, "I love being your pastor." I sometimes name a grief we all carry, or celebrate something joyful about which we are all aware.

Always growing in the craft. Welcoming constructive criticism, proactively listening and learning, reading books and listening to the great preaching of others.

Paradigms for Bearing Witness

One way to think about the way that we, as the royal priesthood, bear witness to the world is by aligning our lives with three paradigmatic charges from God: the Cultural Mandate, the Great Commandment, and the Great Commission. In a sense, we are bearing witness in everything we do, every moment of the day. But it's also necessary to talk about mission as intentional gospel living with a particular view to our lost and broken world.

The Cultural Mandate—Genesis 1:27-28

So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. And God blessed them. And God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth."

This is the starting place of vocation. We are a called people, responding to a Caller, in whose image we are made. Our calling is to become co-creators with God, making culture and caring for creation as royal representatives (regents). We make oblation of people, places, things, and time. This impacts our approach to our contexts, which includes the arts, entrepreneurship and business, cultural diversity, higher education, government, families and homemaking, etc.. As we "seek the shalom of the city" (or wherever we live), we bear witness to the source of shalom.

The Great Commandment—Matthew 22:36-39

"Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?" Jesus replied: "'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.'

Our mission always asks "what is the best way to love this person, this neighborhood, this nation?" Our baked goods for a new neighbor, our love of stranger, and our congressional law-making are all ways we love God and neighbor, and they all bear witness to Jesus. Our pursuit of justice and mercy, the "good works" of our faith, fit well under this charge.

The Great Commission—Matthew 28:19-20

Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

While this charge is more broad than evangelism, there is an emphasis here on leading people from non-disciple to disciple of Jesus, baptizing new believers, and doing so among all ethne/nations.

APPENDIX B

PRIESTCRAFT SUMMATIVE EVALUATION

Name:_____
Date:_____

The final element of the research process is the evaluation of the formational influence this learning experience had upon participants. The nature of my research is more qualitative than quantitative. I felt that being with you and listening to you would yield more fruitful learning for me than a method driven by surveys that can be turned into quantitative data. Though part of my research is based on a method called "participant observation" throughout our online and embodied presence to each other (with me being the "participant" in that phrase), a retrospective view will afford hindsight clarity and the "big picture." This part of the research is called summative evaluation, an effort to look back and answer the question "To what extent did this program yield what we wanted?"

The Priestcraft formation process sought to engage participants with content, exercises, and each other, for the sake of priestly formation in several biblical-theological categories. Please read the attached overview before answering. The more written feedback you are able to give on the impact of Priestcraft, the better I can assess its effectiveness for my current research project, and the more informed I can be for potential revisions before doing it again.

1. Which one or two topics were most generative, resonant, applicable, and/or transformative for you?
    - **Biblical-theological overview of the priesthood theme**: Adam and Eve to Levitical priests to Jesus the Great High Priest to the Royal Priesthood.
    - **Priests are called to make oblation of people, places, things, and time.**
    - **Priests are called to holiness** (personal holiness, and interfacing between the holiness of God and His people).
    - **Priests are called to communication between God and His people** (bringing God's Word/Revelation to His people, and bringing the prayers of the people to God).
    - **Priests bear witness to the world** (the church as a kingdom of priests, interfacing between God and the rest of His creation).
    - **Please discuss/explain:**

2. Priestcraft helped me to better understand or re-imagine my priestly identity.
    - Not at all.
    - Somewhat agree
    - Agree
    - Strongly Agree
    - Please discuss/explain:

3. I gained a broader scope of understanding and articulation of my call as a bearer of God's image.
    - Not at all.
    - Somewhat agree
    - Agree
    - Strongly Agree
    - Please discuss/explain:

4. I gained an increased sense of awe and humility at the call to be set apart as a priestly servants within a kingdom of priests. Not at all.
    - Somewhat agree
    - Agree
    - Strongly Agree
    - Please discuss/explain:

5. I gained a new resonance in my reading of the biblical theological story, through the lens of Adam/Eve as priests to royal priesthood in the New Heavens and New Earth.
    - Not at all.
    - Somewhat agree
    - Agree
    - Strongly Agree
    - Please discuss/explain:

6. My life and ministry are becoming more consonant with the theological breadth/depth of what the Bible says about priesthood.
    - Not at all.
    - Somewhat agree
    - Agree
    - Strongly Agree
    - Please discuss/explain:

7. I gained vocational clarity as ones who make vows and enters Holy Orders within the Anglican Church of North America.
    - Not at all.
    - Somewhat agree
    - Agree
    - Strongly Agree
    - Please discuss/explain:

8. Did the Priestcraft content, community, and process help you gain a theological vision of the full scope of all human vocation that Scripture frames as priestly service? Please explain.

9. Did Priestcraft provide some practical ideas for how to lead their congregation to live as priests of the world? Please explain.

10. Now, more than one year later, what one or two aspects of Priestcraft had the most lasting impact, whether mentioned above or not? Please explain.

11. The final goal, or *telos*, of the Priestcraft formational process is to make better priests, working within ACNA, for the good of the world and the glory of God? Do you think it achieves this goal?

12. Do you have any other comments on the Priestcraft experience?

13. For future Priestcraft cohorts, what would you recommend to improve it?

14. Knowing what you know now would you do Priestcraft again (not repeat it but, looking back, do it for the first time)? Would you recommend it to others?

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